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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

CLASSROOM AS COMMUNITY

by

JEFFREY AURDON ORR ©

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Edmonton, Alberta
Spring, 1995

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Jeffrey A. Orr

40 Knowles Crescent
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S 4P1

April 10, 1995

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled CLASSROOM AS COMMUNITY submitted by Jeffrey A. Orr in partial fulfillment for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

Roberta McKay
Supervisor, Dr. Roberta McKay
Department of Elementary Education

Don Massey
Dr. Don Massey
Department of Elementary Education

Jean Clandinin
Dr. Jean Clandinin
Department of Elementary Education

C. Chamberlin
Dr. Chuck Chamberlin
Department of Elementary Education

Dr. Terry Carson
Department of Secondary Education

Dr. George Wood
External Reader

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the question of how one teacher's (Marlene's) classroom is a community in order to further thinking about the possibilities of education for social life in classrooms. It uses Tonnies's work in sociology on the notions of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft and the literature that is part of the liberalism-communitarian debate in political philosophy to develop a community metaphor for citizenship education which is less political and more relational. By using a collaborative narrative research methodology which is based upon the work of Noddings and Clandinin and Connelly and focusing upon ethnographic elements, the study hears the stories of students and teacher, and gives voice to their embodied narratives. The result is a series of thirteen "community conversations" which re-present the narratives of experience of these children, their teacher, and the researcher about how this classroom is a community. These community conversations explain the context of the classroom and show it to be a place which is heavily based upon a pedagogy of caring and relationality. Seven more community conversations tell stories of a gemeinschaft community which gives children support, allows them to risk, gives them a voice in solving classroom problems, calls upon them to serve their fellow students, both inside, and outside the classroom, invites children to be a part of the community, and engages them in learning which is highly social. Four final community conversations explore aspects of gesellschaft which Marlene experiences as she strives to teach her students individual responsibility, to include children who are "outsiders", to give children room for individualism and acceptance, and to keep the outside forces of gesellschaft from eroding her community. These stories show this community to be a place in which the common good, a sense of equality, dispositions of generosity, caring and otherness, and an enhanced sense of self are given expression through Marlene's personal practical knowledge, and in which gesellschaft forces of affinity and individualism are continually competing for attention. Final chapters reflect upon the implications of this study for future research, social studies and citizenship education, teacher education, and childrens' lives.

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Marlene provided me with a wonderful opportunity to explore the meaning of her classroom as community. As a highly skilled teacher, she made it possible for me to see how a communitarian classroom could be experienced by students. Her students were also wonderful to work with, and their enthusiasm for their classroom made it an exciting community in which to live.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

I. CLASSROOM COMMUNITY AS CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION 1

Narrative Beginnings 1

Re-living my Classroom Story as a Research Story 5

The Beginnings of a Research Relationship 6

Purpose of the Study 9

The Question of Community 14

And so what? 15

II. VOICES FROM THE LITERATURE 18

Introduction 18

The Struggle for Voice in Citizenship Education 18

Liberalism, the Crisis of Modernity, and the Communitarian Critique 29

Citizenship Education as Relational Community 40

The Environment of Classrooms 52

Classroom Environment as a Socio-Psychological Phenomenon 53

Classroom Environment as Hidden Curriculum 55

Classroom Environment as Personal Experience 58

Chapter Summary 61

III. RESEARCH DESIGN 63

Introduction 63

Teachers' Knowledge as Personal Experience 63

Why Personal Experience? 65

Of Ethics, Relationship, and Voice 73

The Unfolding of our Research Relationship 76

My Perspective on Field and Research Text 80

The Research Experience as Lived 83

Summary of Field Texts (April 5 -June 18, 1993) 90

Chapter Summary 92

IV. CLASSROOM CONTEXT 94

Introduction 94

Life in Marlene's Grade Three-Four Classroom 94

Stories of Community Context 102

A Caring Community 102

Children's Literature as Relational Community 117

Chapter Summary 126

V. STORIES OF GEMEINSCHAFT 127

Introduction 127

Weaving A Supportive Fabric 127

Sharing Dark Mountains 142

Bringing All Children Into the Circle 155

Giving Children Voice 164

Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community 173

All of us are Teachers 185

Service in the Larger Community 202

Chapter Summary 213

VI. STORIES OF GESELLSCHAFT 215

Introduction 215

Responsibility for Community 215

Living in the Outer Circle 227

Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance 240

Living in a Small Circle 263

Chapter Summary 271

VII. COMMUNITY RECONSIDERED: GEMEINSCHAFT AND GESELLSCHAFT 272

Introduction 272

Classroom as Community 274

Community as a Place for the Common Good 274

Community as a Place for Equality 281

Community as a Place for Generosity, Caring, and Otherness 284

Community as a Place which Enhances Self 290

The Competing Tensions of Classroom Community 295

Gesellschaft as Individualism 295

Gesellschaft as Affinity 298

Living Amidst the Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft Tension 300

Concluding Thoughts 305

VIII. REFLECTIONS ON THE MEANING OF COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH 308

Introduction 308

Collaborative Research and Differing Views of Time 309

Differing Intentions for Educational Research 313

Co-laboring with Children 316

Conclusion: Implications for Classroom-Based Collaborative Research 323

IX. REFLECTIVE THOUGHTS 326

Introduction 326

A Return to the Beginning: My Naive Notion of Community 326

Classroom Community and Education for Social Life 328

Classroom Community and Teacher Education 331

Collaborative Research and Community 335

Reflections on Future Research Directions 340

Classroom Community, Collaborative Research, and Children 341

Bibliography 345

CHAPTER I

CLASSROOM COMMUNITY AS CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Narrative Beginnings

Robby sat timidly in his desk, towering awkwardly above the other children in my grade 5 and 6 classroom. "He doesn't speak English," Adwina, my teacher assistant and friend told me. "He has never gone to school before." You see, Robby was a 15 year old bush kid, who went with his dad to the trapline each year and got his education there. From my southern perspective in that first year of my career in a northern Saskatchewan Dene community I saw Robby as a boy who should be in school, and I remember secretly telling myself that I would make sure he was. And so I did keep him in school that year, although I often wonder if it was the best place for him. After 15 years of Dene education in the oral and participatory tradition of learning as it had been practiced for countless generations before him, was it right to have him go to school? I taught Robby to write his name, to read a few words, to do some simple arithmetic, and to speak some English that year. But Robby was frustrated. Although his classmates were generally behind the level of literacy which our society expects for children their age, they were many school years ahead of him. He couldn't help but see this, despite my best efforts to deny it and make it go away. Robby stayed in school and struggled with his frustrations every day, all year long, as did some other children who usually were off to other more important pursuits by the time freeze-up set in. And I wonder why?

I often ponder over what keeps children interested in school, for I have never taught in public schools where the culture of the community accepted compulsory schooling as legitimate. In the northern Dene communities where I taught elementary school, it was a cultural norm for most children to determine their own attendance patterns. So I struggled with this issue for the first few years of my teaching. I learned to accept many cultural differences that clashed with my own mainstream, compulsory story of education, as I gradually realized that if I wished these children to be at school, that it was largely up to us together. It would rest on my efforts to design a meaningful and appealing program, and their decision to accept it as such. It seemed to have very little to do with their parents or the education system, which in the southern culture usually somehow ensured that children would attend school.

There were many factors which seemed to be working against children showing up each morning, and much of my energy and thinking was directed to what I could do about it. Children in these communities faced crowded conditions for living and sleeping since most families had 5 or more children and Indian Affairs houses are small two-bedroom structures, with no basement or sheds for storage. Warm beds are hard to leave on winter mornings when daylight comes at recess, and the wood heater which kept the house from freezing is stone cold long before anyone rises. There is wood to chop, water to haul, clothes to hand wash, and younger brothers and sisters to care for, especially if dad is away in the bush hunting caribou, trapping or winter fishing, or mom has been flown south on a medical. And schooling had a very different meaning in these communities. The parents who signed their children's report cards with an X were proud of their children to be able to write their names, and those who had achieved a partial elementary education themselves were pleased if their children reached an elementary grade higher than they had. So there were many reasons why children were often not at school regularly and I felt an obligation to have my classroom environment give them worthy reasons to be there when they could.

Schooling was looked upon in a different light by those of us who learned to see education from this community's perspective and not through our own white southern middle-class eyes. Once I learned to recognize the sacrifice that school attendance meant to some children it seemed much easier to design a classroom that honored their presence. Coercive controlling behaviors drove children out the classroom door like startled caribou, and made us think desperately of ways that would have children see fit to want to climb from a warm bed into a cold house and make the trek to school on an empty stomach. Behavioral rewards were too simplistic and seemed to make children see the classroom as a short term, fair weather place. I guess this is why I tried-sometimes successfully, sometimes not-to alter my classroom to one that was more inviting to those children on the long term. It is also why I tried to be sensitive in my relationship with children so that our learning environment was as risk-free as possible.

There were other influences that brought me to this philosophical outlook on classrooms but these seem to be connected to the needs of these particular children who chose whether or not to be there. So the soft couch became a place for tired children to sleep if they had been kept up in the night by social activities in their home. The reading loft which I built became a quiet place where they could get away from the crowds and be alone as they could not do at home. The peanut butter and crackers in my desk became a welcome bit of nourishment for empty stomachs on those early mornings. Our daily news stories drew us together as a community on the carpet around issues in children's daily lives that had not been valued in their past. Free choice journal writing was their time to collect their thoughts in an often hassled and turbulent life and to have an audience for their fantasies that took them into dreamy situations often some distance from reality.

I certainly did not always meet the needs of these children, but I was ever so conscious of the little things that shape a classroom. As I discarded much of the traditional structure which had been my story before I met Robby and other Dene children, I did so with the realization that the new story I was living was not an accepted one in much of the educational system outside of our community. So although we created classrooms that we thought were warm, safe and open for children to work and learn in as part of a learning community, we recognized that our efforts were often looked upon as suspect by authorities outside of our context when they diverged too far from the mainstream. Education officials seemed suspicious of our unorthodox, difficult to evaluate pedagogy. It was hard for outsiders who flew in and left the same day (if they came at all) to understand our world.

And so such classroom communities have intrigued me ever since, and I often wonder, as I visit classrooms as part of my work in teacher education, whether the children in these classrooms would be there if they didn't have to be. I find myself asking what it means to create a classroom community where students want to live and work and what it means to inhabit a place which aims to give students room to learn.

Re-living my Classroom Story as a Research Story

When I considered the research story that I was attempting to live as a doctoral student, I realized that I was re-visiting my classroom story. I was reflecting on my own classroom story as it shaped my current work in teacher education. I sought to explore what it meant to live and work in a classroom community. As I lived 'in-between' the two worlds of teacher educator and classroom teacher I felt a need to cast light upon my university practice by identifying more fully some of the issues of the field of social studies that are important to my practice.

Living in-between calls upon me to constantly consider my own limitations that increasingly concern me as I spend more time in the academy (Schon,1992) and less in the classroom. Do I rely too heavily upon theory from textbooks to guide my methods instruction? What do I selectively forget and what do I glorify about my own classroom experiences which are now almost five years old? To what extent do I overlook the 'how' in my philosophy of practice in favor of the 'why' and what are the implications of this for my students? Do I too often cloud the specific problematics of practice with a more generalized view of classrooms? These issues beckon me to consider more thoughtfully how I can help student-teachers consider classroom contexts more fully as they prepare to be teachers.

And so I chose to spend several months with a teacher to better understand her classroom community. Within this environment I was also aiming to re-examine my own personal practical knowledge (Clandinin,1985; Clandinin & Connelly,1986a; Connelly & Clandinin,1985,1988) by hearing a teacher's stories and seeing them lived out in practice as a practical embodiment of knowledge. I thought also that perhaps there were some things in my own story that might be worth sharing with my co-researcher so that she may look anew at her stories of practice.

The Beginnings of a Research Relationship

I met Marlene through my work with schools as a facilitator of pre-practicum experiences in the fall of 1992. I will never forget the picture which came to my eyes as I peeked through the glass that separated her classroom from where I stood in the hall. Marlene saw me standing in the hall and invited me into her classroom with a wave of her hand as she continued circulating around the room. She didn't stop to talk to me, for she had many important conversations to carry on with groups of children who were scattered everywhere throughout the classroom. Nonetheless, I was met with a feeling of warmth and sensed that children had freedom to learn in diverse ways. This comforted me and made me feel that I was a part of something important and meaningful. Students were engaged in paired or group reading of a novel in their own spaces. Some sat curled up on the rug in the reading corner busily taking turns reading paragraphs to each other. Others sat at their table-desks and worked eagerly. Several boys read purposefully as they lay propped up on their elbows like walruses on the carpet. Three girls invited me to join them in the reading corner and proudly took turns reading expressively. I would occasionally glance around the room as a typical teacher might who was anticipating the off task behavior of children, but I found only a busy hum of activity. Children were very interested in this activity and when I remarked to one of the three girls at the transition time to the next language activity about how busy they all seemed she said, "Yes we work very hard in here, and it's lots of fun."

Children felt free to be wherever they wanted during this activity, although in other activities, as I was to later discover, there was a much clearer expectation of where and what they were to learn. In other activities I observed Marlene taking more control of events, but I still sensed a reciprocity in determining what was to happen. In a math lesson, for instance, she had children explain their individual responses to questions and she celebrated with them the different ways to achieve answers. These children knew what to do when they finished their math sheet and did not feel that it was against the rules to talk with one another during it, or to sit clustered in groups as they worked together. I was to find out in a later conversation with Marlene that she encourages children to help each other with their work.

Marlene obviously cared about her students and made a special effort to praise them publicly for examples of work that were well done. Yet she did not do this in such a manner that it appeared at all artificial. She cared enough about them to also politely point out areas in which they were in need of changing their responses, and did not need to do so in private, for there appeared to be a climate of acceptance for such dialogue. She also gave of herself in the creation of the physical environment, since I could detect the care and thought in the classroom displays. Her titles on bulletin boards were intermingled with children's work that showed her acceptance of their art and writing creations. I counted twenty baskets of personal soft cover trade books, and over a hundred of her own hard cover books that were made available to them for reading.

When I told her that her classroom brought forth my image of community, she stated that it was very important to her as a teacher that her classroom function as a community. She told a short story of how she wanted her students to help each other. She saw her classroom as a place that was to reflect the children's lives and where a classroom community could be built together. In many ways her classroom also reminded me of the classroom that I struggled to achieve in my days in northern Saskatchewan. It was a place where I would be excited to spend some time to figure out what it means for these people to live and work together as a community.

And so I asked Marlene if she would share her classroom with me for several months. After several conversations in which we negotiated what I would be doing in her classroom, we formed a research relationship. I joined her and her students as a researcher, co-teacher, and learner, as part of this classroom community at the beginning of April, 1993 and stayed there until late June.

Purpose of the Study

I think there is narrative unity between much of my own story as a teacher and my desire to research the issue of classroom community. Much of my work at the Northern Teacher Education Program in northern Saskatchewan was in the area of social studies education. Through this practical experience, as well as through the literature I was reading at the time, I was slowly becoming aware of the need for a form of social studies education that exposed children to notions of citizenship (Banks,1990; Ellis,1986; Barnett,1989; Saskatchewan Education,1973). I saw through this work the important connection that education could make to cultural survival and growth and to the creation of a classroom community by placing a local emphasis upon Cree, Dene, Metis and northern values through the regular and hidden curriculum (Jackson,1968; Gordon,1988). I began to see that cultural survival and transformation through the regular and hidden curriculum was a large part of the reason why the people of northern Saskatchewan were speaking out in favor of employing teachers of aboriginal ancestry in equal proportion to the children in northern Saskatchewan (Northern Lights School Division,1991). I thus realized that the informal things that we do as teachers powerfully shape our students' lives.

Yet as I entered into a study of citizenship, I did so with a realization that almost all of the Canadian and American civic education literature that I was reading had been written by the intelligensia (Shaver,1981), who are the policy makers and university personnel involved with education. Although this literature was exciting in its call for more emphasis upon education for *democratic* citizenship, it seemed to *undemocratically* ignore the voices of teachers and students. I saw this quest for new civic education rationales, therefore, as falling prey to the very problem that the intelligensia sought to change. In their hurry to ensure that civic education was appropriately taught in schools so that democracy would prevail, democratic means of change were temporarily bi-passed. Failing to listen to the voices of those who were creating ways to teach for citizenship was also puzzling to me, because it meant that the practical knowledge which classroom teachers brought to the civic education issue was replaced with an academic, de-contextualized voice that did not represent the complexities (Jackson,1968), dilemmas (Lampert, 1985), or particularities (Lyons,1990) of which classroom teachers are concerned. What is not considered in this civic education literature, is how university and teacher voices can be heard together in a conversation that allows for "a fusion of different horizons into a new understanding which they then hold in common" (Smith,1991). I felt that a major goal of my research was to attempt to live productively in-between these two worlds of the classroom and the academy (Carson,1989), and to hear the differences and similarities in these separated voices. I saw also the need to remember the voices of children, since they too have been marginalized in this citizenship discourse.

Yet even as I sought to explore notions of citizenship from a classroom perspective and to hear new voices, I realized that I must be cautious not to privilege my own male voice. The notion of citizenship is problematic because it is drawn from a tradition that has excluded women from its ranks (Pateman,1989; Noddings, 1992); has drawn heavily upon the discipline of political science as a source for teaching, (Barr, Barth, & Shermis, 1977; Quigley & Bahmueller,1991), and has ignored many aspects of public (Ichivov,1990) and private (Noddings,1992; Pateman,1989) life. So as I saw maleness, politicalness and intelligensia privilege as perspectives that were strongly represented in notions of citizenship, I searched for a fresh perspective on citizenship which was more democratic and socially inclusive.

The concept of community, which is embraced by communitarian scholars (Tonnies, 1887/1957; Oliner, 1983; Friedman, 1983; Noddings,1987; Pateman,1989) may be more helpful in allowing us to see both a means and an end for re-searching citizenship roles. The word community has etymological roots in the Latin noun 'communis', which means "fellowship, and community of relations and feelings." It has social connotations that stem from life in association with others (Simpson & Weiner, 1989, p. 581). Community implies that human relationships are important, which allows for a much broader realm of possibilities with which we can examine ways of living and working together. Community goes beyond the political to the public, the emotional, the moral, the personal, and the private and allows our concern for citizenship to move away from liberal representativeness (Schumpeter,1949; Dahl,1956) towards a more comprehensive concern for all members in the group (Barber, 1984). It values a discourse that is usually consensual rather than competitive (Barber,1984) and is aimed at relational and caring notions (Oliner,1983; Tonnies, 1887/1957), that move from affinity towards otherness (Friedman,1983).

Engaging in inquiry about community through being part of a community also seems to be a more appropriate way to carry out research. It is more encompassing of viewpoints that have been marginalized in the literature. It fits with the research tradition that has attempted to listen to the voices of teachers and students in a collaborative undertaking (Stenhouse, 1975; Carson,1986; McKay,1990; Borys,Taylor, & LaRocque,1991), based on fidelity (Noddings,1986) and relational friendship (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994). I felt it appropriate, therefore, to try to mirror the process that I sought to understand through the research process which I used.

My own personal story has also shaped the research method which I used. I was intrigued by the above researchers' efforts to engage in collaborative research with teachers that honored their work instead of questioning it from afar. Working together in a partnership and valuing the stories of classroom teachers interested me, because I had struggled as a teacher and with other teachers to have our voices heard by southern policy makers and administrators who sometimes would just as soon have ignored the stories of students like Robby as invest in ways to have their educational needs be met. I had also found my professional work to be most rewarding when it had included partnerships, collective endeavors, cooperative undertakings and community approaches that occurred alongside adversity. Cooperation had deep-rooted meaning for me.

This brings me back to one of my first jobs as a laborer in a blueberry cooperative in which I heard the stories of struggle told by its founding members. They were small mixed farmers living on the margins of subsistence in rural Nova Scotia and blueberries offered the only hope of a cash crop to help them get ahead with their payments. They did so by banding together in a cooperative on equal terms to cultivate, collect and market their product, against the odds of American entrepeneurs who wished they wouldn't, so they could buy them for a pittance of what they were worth.

The Saskatchewan story of educational cooperation was also a significant influence on my life as a faculty member at the Northern Teacher Education Program. I learned to work in partnership with numerous Indian bands, tribal councils, local school committees, northern provincial school boards, both Saskatchewan universities, the federal and provincial governments, and many, many classroom teachers. This part of my story has taught me that collective will is a powerful means of bridging worlds. It is with these stories of cooperation and sharing that I entered into a collaborative (Carson & Jacknicke, 1989) relationship with Marlene and her students to tell this story of classroom as community.

Collaboration has been viewed as a way to consider anew the importance "of working together on a common question" and highlights the significance of open negotiation of method and mutual inquiry into the meaning of teaching "in conjunction" with others (Carson & Jacknicke,1989, p. 4). Carson and Jacknicke claim that much of the research that goes on between schools and the university has been cooperative not collaborative because it is researcher dominated and the research question and method are controlled by the researcher. I do not wish to engage in research that is controlled solely by me, since I have had glimpses of the undesirable affects of this form of relationship in my educational work, and have benefitted greatly from relationships which are mutually designed and equally shared.

I entered into this collaborative stance with three basic intentions. First of all, I wanted to try to co-construct a collective consciousness that avoided a partnership wherein the research parts were valued more than the whole (Lasley, Matczynski and Williams, 1992). Secondly I wanted to live out a "partnership among friends" which was built upon mutual trust and shared authority (De Bevoise,1986, p.10). Lastly, I wanted to explore Lieberman's premise that "the more people work together, the more [they] have the possibility of understanding. . . complex problems" (1986, p.6).

The Question of Community

As I engaged in collaborative research with Marlene, we together sought to better understand her classroom community. We engaged in conversation, observation and communal reconstruction of this classroom community. We puzzled over stories and events, past and present, that led us to a deeper understanding of her classroom community. And so, our question was:

How is this classroom a community?

Related to this broader question were these four sub-questions:

1) How is Marlene's perspective of classroom community reflected in her stories as told and lived?

2) How do her stories shape the story she lives in her classroom?

3) What are the stories that children tell and live as part of this classroom community?

4) How do my stories shape the relationship I find myself in as part of this classroom community?

And so what?

This study provides a different perspective on civic education, by viewing the role of citizenship more broadly than is typical in the literature (Ichilov,1990). Teachers have not traditionally been asked to share how their stories of classrooms determine the way they live out their role as civic educators. Conversations (Carson,1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 1988; McKay, 1990) with teachers allow us to explore aspects of teachers' knowledge that express a notion of classroom life that contributes to an understanding of community (Oliner, 1983; Friedman,1983).

Civic education advocates have acknowledged the significance of classroom life as civic education (Bricker,1989), the importance of an implicit civics curriculum (Ehman,1980; Torney, Oppenheim, & Farnen,1975), and the power of the hidden curriculum (Hepburn & Radz,1983; Giroux & Penna,1988) in shaping citizenship dispositions. Many authors have called for a detailed interpretive study of classroom climate and how it relates to education for democratic citizenship but only Wood (1992) has done so. This study can be seen as a partial contribution to this qualitative understanding of "how the attributes of . . . climate are implemented and integrated, how they mediate civic dispositions, and to what extent the goals of democratic citizenship education are served" in one classroom (Angell, 1991, p. 256). Although this study is not specifically aimed at "democratic" climate, it makes a contribution to our understanding of classroom climate "that is urgently needed in schools " (Hepburn & Radz, 1983, p. 2). This study of civic education as classroom community explores personal aspects of community (Oliner, 1983; Friedman, 1983) through personal experience methods (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994) and expands our conception of education for citizenship.

Personal experience methodology provided a forum for the expression of our collaborative relationship (McKay, 1990) and allowed me to see ways of listening to what people within this classroom had to say. It allowed me to hear voices (Elbaz,1991) that challenged me to re-think my conceptions of classrooms in both universities and schools. These voices helped me see Marlene's stories of her personal practical knowledge (Connelly and Clandinin,1985), both lived and told, as part of my own emerging understanding of community. They showed me new ways to think about living in classrooms which allowed us together to speak back to the intelligensia (Shaver,1981) about classroom complexities and dilemmas that are currently neglected in their understandings of civic education. The stories of her students helped remind us of the need for civic purposes to be more relational (Noddings,1987) and aware of the private (Noddings, 1992).

Conversations can allow us to really "listen from the inside" to the narratives of experience (Clandinin & Connelly,1994) which shape classroom practice. I use an interpretive method which I call "community conversations" to re-present the voices of Marlene as teacher, the children as students, and myself as researcher. My goal is to portray some of the complex meaning of this classroom from a multi-vocal perspective. By listening carefully to the teacher's and childrens' stories and observing the embodied knowledge (Johnson,1988) of this teacher, I document how collaborative research as "community conversation" allows us to become attuned to Marlene's classroom as a community.

CHAPTER II

VOICES FROM THE LITERATURE

Introduction

As I became interested in pursuing this topic as part of my doctoral research, I was drawn to four different aspects of the literature. In exploring new notions of citizenship education I felt obligated to hear the voices of those who had been marginalized in the literature and to do this I realized that I must explore ways to link the amazing classroom knowing which teachers exhibit with issues of citizenship education. So literature from citizenship education, political theory, the community metaphor, and social-psychological, hidden curriculum and personal experience aspects of classroom climate are included as part of my sense-making.

The Struggle for Teacher Voice in Citizenship Education

Citizenship education is considered a necessary and significant part of the school's responsibility (Beyer, 1988; Quigley & Bahmueller, 1991; McLeod, 1989; Osborne, 1991), although there is a great diversity of voices which are speaking out about the form and ideological perspective it should take. One of the most comprehensive and useful frameworks for considering these diverse civic education perspectives is put forth by Finkelstein (1988). She has classified the movements which are seeking to change citizenship education into four camps: civic imperials, civic spiritualists, civic intellectuals and civic communitarians.

Civic imperials have called for a "retreat from curriculum choice" (Finklestein, 1988, p. 250). They advocate a restriction in the curriculum to a limited body of knowledge which is highly Anglo-centric (Bloom, 1987; Hirsch, 1987) or a common core of citizenship values and constitutional basics (Butts, 1983; Murphy, 1983) as the antidote for a failing civic education in schools. They speak with certainty about what is needed to create an educational system which fulfills its obligation to democratic society, yet each is professed from its own specific ideological bias. Bloom and Hirsch are unabashedly Eurocentric and rightist in their suggestions, and Butts and Murphy stand for a political, law oriented approach which is based exclusively upon the principles of American liberty and justice.

Civic spiritualists "call for a conceptual rescue operation for the dispirited individual" (Finklestein, 1988, p. 250) in society. They see societys' interactions as being too political and materialistic and devoid of the spiritual and moral aspects of life (Sullivan, 1981). They urge a return of common shared values into the curriculum to save individuals from anti-democratic social fragmentation and privatism (Warren, 1983). They also call for a return of moral thinking to public life and a promotion of social responsibility (Giroux, 1988).

Civic intellectuals see a need to be concerned about "the quality of civic understanding" (Finklestein, 1988, p. 250) in society, but argue for more of a conceptual assault on its inadequacies. They see modernist notions such as scientific knowledge and the efficiency movement-signposts of technical rationalism- as major threats to societal freedom. Stanley (1981), for instance, shows the way political philosophy has been appropriated by technical rationalism and capitalism, resulting in a loss of morality in the public domain. Civic intellectuals see morality and ethics as having been cloistered away in the private domain and replaced by a public language of technical rationalism which is characterized by consumerism and is devoid of spirituality and morality. They advocate the empirical examination of civic values to determine how morality and ethics can best be returned to our society (Stanley, 1983). They also urge an exploration and transformation of the ways that modern societal features such as government, economy, and schooling are devoid of, and serve as barriers to, moral values of justice, freedom and dignity (Finkelstein, 1985).

Civic communitarians, led by feminist scholars, call for an introduction of "the language of morality, love, and sentiment into public thinking" (Finklestein, 1988, p. 251). They have lobbied for a relational approach to civic education (Noddings, 1987; Burstyn, 1983; Oliner, 1983), which brings public aspects of life together with the private (Pateman, 1989). This call for a return to considerations of the private in the public is aimed at replacing the competive-individualistic stance of civic education with a new form of discourse and action that is caring, family and community oriented, and less patriarchal.

As Finklestein tells us, all four of these civic education perspectives, although differing somewhat in the nature and degree of their substantive arguments, share some common ideals for civic education reform. They all recognize the need for more serious attention to be placed upon the relationship between education and citizenship; they are aware of the need to see the public and private domains more as one; and they see issues of morality and relationships as being much more important than they have traditionally been treated. She sees these common arguments as part of a new vision for citizenship education.

Finklestein goes on to say that we must undo the technicist mentality which has dominated education and replace it with a moral vision of educators as translators and mediators. As translators, teachers would become "self-conscious participants, observers and interpreters of educational purposes and practices who, as they do their work, discover and re-create new public forms" (p. 254). As mediators, they would bridge separate worlds, "discovering, designing, and forging links between otherwise uncommunicative agencies" (p. 254) such as universities and schools. She ends by advocating a form of civic education which supports teachers as researchers who "model responsible civic learning" (p. 255), although her own work is devoid of teachers' perspectives.

The total absence of teacher research in the midst of this plurality of civic education voices is disconcerting to me. Although the substantive argument for more emphasis upon the moral and the private is compelling, teachers' voices are silent in this discourse, despite the fact that they are given the major responsibility of educating for democratic citizenship. It is my contention that the many calls for reform in education for democratic citizenship which Finklestein elucidates are themselves undemocratic because they do not represent the voices of teachers. This lack of attention to teacher voices is connected to a general lack of attention to teacher and student voices in educational reform (Hollingsworth & Minarik, 1991) and in teacher research (Duckworth, 1986), but it also may be a reflection of the problems inherent in democracy as we have come to know it. Reform efforts and research have been dominated by an elite voice which represents universities, school boards and governments, but which is remote from the realities of classrooms (Carter, 1993; Hollingsworth & Minarik, 1991). As a researcher who holds the views of teachers with respect, the failure to listen to their voices makes it necessary for me to view the recommendations of the elite with a certain degree of unfinishedness.

Up until the publication of *CIVITAS: A Framework for Civic Education* (Quigley & Bahmueller, 1991), major civic education reform agendas in both the United States and Canada did not even include teachers in their deliberations (Jones, 1985), or included only token teacher voices (McLeod, 1989). Although *CIVITAS* involved teachers, they remained in an advisory capacity on its National Teachers Advisory Committee. No teachers were on the more influential Framework Development Committee, and none of the book's 44 authors were teachers.

This failure to hear teacher voices cannot be considered unproblematic because Shaver (1981) tells us that intelligensia views about civic education rationales differ markedly from that of teachers. He found teachers to be concerned with concrete aspects of classroom life that stemmed from particular student issues such as management and the desire to instill certain values for living together, whereas academics and policy makers saw civic studies as a more intellectual, inquiry-oriented endeavor. This attention by teachers to specific cases is similar to the particularity with which Lyons (1990) and McCutcheon (1982) found teachers to experience moral dilemmas and planning problems in their work. If we are to represent a perspective for citizenship education reform which is meaningful for classroom practice, I believe it is incumbent upon us to ask more teachers to tell their story of what civic education means in relation to their personal beliefs about teaching, to listen to their voices and to discover how their notions of civic education are embodied in their practice.

Parker and Jarolimek (1984) call for social studies to play a critical role in the cultivation of democratic citizens who, as pluralists and global thinkers, hold a constructive, change-oriented perspective. As informed, skillful citizens, students are to learn a commitment to democratic values through broad-based participation in many aspects of community and school life. They argue that not teaching citizenship *in* social studies means the removal of the only "part of the school curriculum where direct citizenship education occurs" (p. 28) which leaves "the cultivation of a special kind of citizen. . . to chance" (p. 29). This approach to citizenship privileges the knowledge which students gain from the formal curriculum over the knowledge which students construct through the hidden curriculum. This form of learning is advocated despite what we know about the powerful and important messages which students obtain about schooling and civic education through the hidden curriculum (Jackson, 1968;

Apple, 1971; Giroux & Penna, 1988; Bricker, 1989).

Citizenship has been shown to be teachable through classroom relationships. A democratic classroom atmosphere was found to be an important factor in determining students' political attitudes (Ehman,1980). A major comparative study of civic education in ten countries concluded that when students perceive it to be acceptable to express opinions and engage in free discussions, they were "more knowledgeable, less authoritarian, and more interested" (Torney, Oppenheim, & Farnen, 1975, p.18). But just how such an open climate is lived out in classrooms is not clear from these empirical studies.

Emphasis upon a climate that encourages critical thinking and rational decision-making has been suggested by other civic education advocates (Engle & Ochoa, 1988). They see rational decision-making or "counter socialization," as being dependent upon the learning of democratic values that are obtained through "socialization" in the younger grades. Children are first to learn the core values of "respect for the dignity of the individual, . . . the right of individuals and groups to participate in decisions," (p. 9) "the right of all citizens to be informed," the achievement of "an open society [where] change and improvement are taken for granted," and the "independence of the individual from the group" (p. 10). Students then develop a more independent critical thought that counter balances the forces of socialization.

A reflective classroom climate that permits "participants to communicate easily in a supportive yet stimulating setting" is seen as being essential to this form of citizenship education (Engle & Ochoa, 1988, p. 163). Such an environment rests upon an appropriate balance between stimulating controversial issues for discussion and a risk-free and supportive context in which to dialogue, a context also advocated by other scholars (Osborne, 1991; Giroux & Penna, 1988). We need to ask if this is happening in classrooms, but it seems time to ask *teachers* how socialization and counter socialization should become part of *their* practice, instead of using a researcher-dominated methodology which privileges the researcher's questions and ignores the teacher's. This may prove more useful than studies of the climate of classrooms which have often found fault with teachers' classroom environment, and have offered few workable solutions to the faults which they claim to uncover (Apple & King, 1975).

David Bricker's (1989) philosophical study of teachers' talk about their work provides an important foray into the political thinking of teachers that is manifested in their practice. It holds some of the answers to the questions which need to be asked about how classrooms serve as places where civic education is learned. He concluded that the five teachers he worked with were liberal egalitarians who believe that a person's natural endowments belong to the individual, not the collective and that fairness to the individual is expressed by how we make it possible for students to achieve their own educational opportunity. This was manifested by the way these teachers said that they engaged students in activities which promoted personal autonomy rather than the common good, through such actions as having them work alone. This is part of a general goal of fairness which these teachers created by trying to inspire all students to achieve according to their natural academic endowments as they simultaneously aimed to achieve general quality standards which could be applied equally to all.

Bricker has made an important contribution to the research in citizenship education because he has identified and explained the political/ideological perspective and the educational implications of one form of teaching; liberal egalitarianism. The liberal egalitarian category of teachers' perspectives about citizenship education and how they live it out in the classroom is a belief which Bricker feels is predominant in American classrooms. He has worked with teachers who, as liberal egalitarians, perpetuate a hidden curriculum which promotes fairness for students through individualism and meritocracy.

Yet Bricker argues that the goal of having students work alone is misguided because it teaches children that this form of learning develops their autonomy, when it actually inhibits it. He develops the argument that learning is intrinsically social and makes a philosophical case for collaborative learning as a way to promote autonomy. He says:

> My argument is that periodic collaboration would help make students aware of the social nature of academic achievement and by doing so would help their autonomy, because autonomy involves differentiating between oneself and everything that is social (Bricker, 1989, p. 54).

In arguing for collaborative learning as a basis of developing autonomy, Bricker is attempting to rescue liberalism from its communitarian critics. He does this by showing how the motive of generosity, rather than general, utilitarian, or specific duty, is a worthy reason for helping the "other". He attacks

Rawls's (1971) theory in which the more talented have a *general duty* to help others who are less fortunate than themselves. This general duty theory is based on the belief that every person has the right to benefit from the talents of others and that the goal of society is to ensure that individuals don't use their own talents to make themselves better off than their neighbors without first helping their neighbors become better off. Bricker claims that this general duty argument is flawed because it denies people entitlement to their own natural endowments and restricts their individual autonomy and freedom. *Utilitarians* concentrate their efforts upon maximizing "the amount of good" overall, rather than focusing upon the particular individuals who are receiving the good. Bricker also sees this as flawed because it privileges the overall good of society at the expense of the good of specific individuals. *Specific duty* exists when individuals impose an obligation towards each other but not to everyone. This enables people to remain free to live lives which are somewhat autonomous, but it does not meet with the liberal egalitarian ideal of treating all people as equals, because it allows individuals to favor some people over other people.

Bricker remains convinced that collaborative learning provides students with the opportunity to develop a deeper commitment towards the other because it has the potential to nurture a sense of *generosity.* A disposition towards generosity can be said to exist when people help others for the sake of helping them and have no expectation of getting something in return for their efforts. Bricker argues that we cannot ever ensure that such virtues as generosity will be learned, but if we involve students in appropriate experiences it may allow them to be acquired. In making the case for involvement in collaborative activities as one way that the virtue of generosity can be aroused, he also shows the significance of virtuous conduct as non-obligatory. To Bricker, it is important that people not feel obligated to act, but rather, that they do so out of a general regard for the other as a person.

Although it was *his* research agenda, with *his* questions and not the teachers, it is an important piece of work. It is important because it attempts to explore the beliefs which teachers hold and apply them to political theory to show the link to civic education. It does this by making explicit some of the aspects of a teachers' hidden curriculum, which reveals their implicit beliefs about civic education. It provides an example of one way that (liberal egalitarian) teachers' beliefs about citizenship education can be heard.

The wide divergence of opinion amongst the intelligensia as to what counts, or should count, as civic education, stems partially from different ideological conceptions of citizenship and democracy. This diversity of ideological conceptions can be traced to the political perspectives which are held by these individuals which come from two main forms of political theory, liberalism and communitarianism. An examination of some of the key arguments put forward in these two forms of political theory will help illuminate some of the ideological differences amongst citizenship education advocates, and provide a conceptual framework for a deeper exploration of citizenship education.

Liberalism, the Crisis of Modernity, and the Communitarian Critique

Citizenship education, like all other curriculum areas, is tied to wider societal trends and issues. The great diversity of opinion which we witness vis-a-vis citizenship education goals can be traced to competing conceptions about how our political society should be organized. North American citizenship education exists within the wider context of our liberal democratic society which is continually living in-between liberalist (Bricker, 1989; Tarrant, 1989) and communitarian-participatory democracy (Barber, 1984; Pateman,1989/1994). Contemporary neo-conservatives such as the Reagan, Thatcher and Mulroney governments best exemplify the elements of liberalism, whereas the Canadian liberal movement is ideologically in between the traditional liberal and communitarian perspectives. These disparate conceptions of political reality reveal the tension between liberalist notions of liberty, equal rights and political neutrality which characterize our public institutions and societal relationships, and the values of communal association which are often learned in the home, neighborhood, and within fraternal groups, and are promoted as public discourse by communitarians (Daly, 1994). This tensionality has important implications for citizenship education.

Although there are a number of different aspects of liberalism evident in our democratic states (Bricker, 1989; Tarrant, 1989), liberalism is rooted in a struggle for the primacy of individual rights and freedoms over collective rights. Historically, liberalism emerged as part of a movement which sought to free society from monarchist rule and to justify a new political order founded upon democratic principles (Daly, 1994). John Locke (1689/1994), one of the first political philosophers to attempt to justify the rights of individuals in society, wrote at the dawn of the British industrial revolution as an advocate for free enterprise and democratic individualism. His work was followed by a long tradition of writers in political philosophy such as John Stuart Mill (1859/1969), Jeremy Bentham (1776/1960), and John Rawls (1971) who aimed to justify various aspects of a libertarian political theory.

Although each of these scholars approaches liberalism from slightly different perspectives, their liberal political philosophies have two central principles in common. The liberal tradition is based upon a "claim of priority of right" (Daly, 1994, p. xvi), which means that civil and individual political liberty takes precedence over anything that might seek to displace these liberties. Foundational to the centrality of basic individual rights is a fundamental belief in the equal worth of all people. The "claim of neutrality" (p. xiv), the other central premise of liberalism, calls for government to remain neutral about conceptions of the good, because to do otherwise would be to erode the right of free citizens to individual liberty. "People are essentially concerned with protecting their individual interests from those whose interests may, and often do, conflict with their own" (Beyer, 1988, p. 263). For liberals, political institutions exist primarily to protect the rights and freedoms of the individual and participation in these institutions was to be guided by private self-interests rather than the common good.

Thus as Qualter (1986) tells us, liberal society is like a bucket of marbles.

> The bucket is no more than a container to keep them together in some kind of union. It is distinct from them, and they would continue to exist as marbles even if the bucket disappeared. . . . Individual and state are separate things, united simply by convention and convenience and the desire to provide some kind of order to the lives of atomistic individuals (p. 27).

John Rawls (1971) has made the most important contribution to the reconceptualization of liberalism in the post-war world (Avineri and De-Shalit, 1992). He was attempting to show the conceptual fit between his theory of liberalism and the established perspective of American societal and institutional democracy (Daly, 1994). Rawls's work is considered significant because of his formulation of a theory of distributive justice as part of liberal thought and the emphasis he placed upon the importance of individual rights as part of this theory. Although Rawls is a moral individualist who believes socio-political arrangements should be judged by the degree to which they bring benefits to individuals (Kukathas & Pettit, 1990), his theory of justice also makes an important contribution to the creation of a theory which is considered to be democratic egalitarian and collective (Bricker, 1989).

Rawls outlined the moral principles which would form the essence of a just society if we approached this issue impartially. He claimed that the two principles would be:

> First: each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others.
> Second: social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage, and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all (Rawls, 1971, p. 60).

Rawls believed in a "difference principle" which meant that the inequalities of society should be eradicated wherever possible. This would be done by regarding "the distribution of natural talents as a common asset and. . . [by sharing] in the benefits of this distribution whatever it turns out to be" (p. 101). This general duty theory (Bricker, 1989) is based on the assumption that those with more talents should help the less talented to become better off by sharing their natural talents with them.

Rawls goes on to argue that his theory of justice has the potential to create a stable society because it upholds the values of society which we cherish (Kukathas & Pettit, 1990). Rawls makes it clear that by establishing a theory of justice, he is asking that we view the right and the just as having a priority over the good.

> The desire to express our nature as a free and equal rational being can be fulfilled only by acting on the principles of justice as having first priority. . . . Therefore in order to realize our nature we have no alternative but to plan to preserve our sense of justice as governing our other claims (p. 574).

This location of the priority of the right before the good makes Rawls a major advocate for the principles of liberal democracy. Although his work has been the most original and comprehensive treatise justifying a liberal perspective in contemporary times, it has not been without its critics.

Rapid societal change and a crisis in confidence in our political institutions has brought community to the forefront of the debate over the kind of political world which is desirable and feasible for our society (Dallmayr, 1978; Avineri and De-Shalit, 1992; Daly, 1994). Liberal society has relied upon "the public spirit of involved citizens" who learned the values of community in the home, at school, and through the church, but communitarians argue that the private sphere where communal values once flourished has been overrun by individualism (Taylor, 1985/1992; Daly, 1994).

Liberalism has been challenged as being an inadequate framework for achieving a just society (Sandel, 1984/1992; Taylor, 1985/1994). Communitarians argue that liberalism is too heavily based on an ethics of individualism and places too little value upon the relationships with others, and neglects the importance of feelings by overemphasizing rational thought (Taylor,1985/1994; Daly, 1994). This stress upon personal liberty weakens the obligations which people have towards each other, since by over-emphasizing personal liberty, autonomy has taken precedence over relationships of mutuality with the other.

Communitarians also argue that by holding liberty up as the ultimate value, liberalism fails to allow for the development of a variety of conceptions of the good. By stressing the priority of rights over the good, liberalism does not establish an overall central conception of the good society (Sandel, 1984/1992; Daly, 1994).

Beyer and Wood (1985) argue that the moral principles of equality, democracy and autonomy which are central to North American liberal society have been problematic when lived out in practice. The principle of equality has been distorted to mean equality of opportunity which in fact limits equality by legitimizing disparities of wealth and power amongst people. They argue true equality must embrace all classes of individuals and not be influenced by gender, position, or status. Democracy, their second principle, has been based on Schumpeter's (1949) elitist notion of participation that relies upon political representatives. This is seen as problematic because when political life is oriented towards a representative government, decision making becomes peripheral to the life of the ordinary citizen, since it is performed by groups of political elite who determine the paths that society will follow (Schumpeter, 1949). Beyer and Wood support a return to the broad participatory aspects of democracy which are inclusive of all classes of people. Their last principle, autonomy, is often manifested wrongly as egocentric individualism, and they contend that this form of autonomy means that freedom from restraint is gained at the expense of restraint on others. Beyer and Wood see these three liberalist principles as problematic because they rest on false assumptions that limit democracy.

Because of these many criticisms, communitarians are calling for a renewed union between the liberal values of freedom and equality and the values of community. They argue that doing so may help people resist the tyrannies of a liberal society. Several communitarian scholars have put forth their perspective about what these communal values should look like.

Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit (1807/1977) is considered to be a seminal work in the new communitarian political philosophy (Avineri & De-Shalit, 1992; Daly, 1994). He argues that ethical principles which are community-specific offer us a higher level of morality than the universal ethics of morality which liberals aspire to through their priority of the right over the good and their notion of the free and rational person (Avineri & De-Shalit, 1992). Hegel sees the self as socially constructed, and an emphasis upon community is the basis upon which the individual learns to be there for the other and to realize that, "I behold the others as myself, and myself as them" (Hegel,1807/1994, p. 39). His notion of spirit as the "I that is We and We that is I" (Hegel, 1807/1977, p. 110) allows for an understanding of social and political association as being a union of individuals who are fully aware of and assert their own independence, but who choose to voluntarily and freely associate with one another (Carr, 1986). By arguing that we derive personal freedom from community membership, Hegel provides a strong alternative to the social contract theory of liberalism which preceeded it, and his work has been foundational to the writings of other communitarian political philosophers who followed him (Daly, 1994).

Charles Taylor (1985/1994) has been a strong critic of the individualism which liberalism promotes. He sees community as a basic good, because as we associate with others it is possible for us to find our own morality. He attacks the modern malaise which has led us to lose confidence in our governments and in the value of our society and urges us to see personal freedom and self development which are part of the values inherent in family and community as being central to the salvation of a modern identity. Yet he also warns that the erosion of communal values by modern society is undermining community and family, which in turn threatens to destroy the possibilities for freedom and self development.

Another possible future for citizenship and democracy is evident in Barber's (1984) strong democracy. He sees strong democracy as a viable alternative to the inadequacies, failures and complexities of modernist liberal democracy. Strong democracy offers some very promising values for living together in a way that attempts to overcome traditional liberalism and to enter the post-modern era with a revisionary rather than a deconstructive or eliminative stance (Griffin, 1992).

> Strong democracy in the participatory mode resolves conflict in the absence of an independent ground through a participatory process of ongoing, proximate self-legislation and the creation of a political community capable of transforming dependent private individuals into free citizens and partial and private interests into public goods (Barber, 1984, p. 151).

Barber sees community as growing from political participation while it simultaneously makes participation possible. Strong democracy is politics that allows people to live together as a community so that conflict is transformed through community problem-solving at the same time that participation shapes community. It stands as a unique form of communitarianism because it proports to make the quest for common ends compatible with the preservation of individuality through the dialectic and embraces plurality and conflict as necessary starting points for political dialogue. Participation and community are the necessary components which make up citizenship in a strong democracy and it is the dialectic between these two elements which makes strong democracy an attractive alternative to liberalism.

> Community without participation first breeds unreflected consensus and uniformity, then nourishes coercive conformity, and finally engenders

> unitary collectivism of a kind that stifles citizenship and the autonomy on which political activity depends. Participation without community breeds mindless enterprise and undirected, competitive interest mongering. Community without participation merely rationalizes collectivism, giving it an aura of legitimacy. Paticipation without community merely rationalizes individualism, giving it the aura of democracy (p. 155).

Strong democracy is made possible by a continual process of "democratic talk, deliberation, judgement, and action" (p. 170). Such political judgement is developed through social interaction in which individuals seek a common consciousness that is neither objective nor subjective. "It is a kind of 'we' thinking that compels individuals to reformulate their interests, purposes, norms, and plans in a mutualistic language of public goods" (p. 171). A common consciousness is developed through three phases, involving common talk, common decision-making and common action. Common action evolves from common decision-making and empowers citizens to carry out what they have commonly willed. Potential to act is limited only by the will of the community to work together. It enhances both participants and their communities and contributes to a form of citizenship that is self-governing rather than representative and elitist. These interlinking aspects of political judgement that create common consciousness are important guideposts for creating an alternative to the elements of liberalism which Barber sees as thin democracy.

All the problems of modernity will not likely be solved by Barber's notion of strong democracy, but it does provide us with a useful way to re-vision another possible future for education and democracy. It has elements of communitarianism and relationality, yet it does not completely abandon the liberalist notions of autonomy and individual identity. It stands strongly in contrast to the political agenda of liberalism and is a hopeful alternative to the ideological tensions in which education is embedded.

Gutmann (1985/1994), like Barber, calls for a reconciliation between the differences of liberals and communitarians so that we are "attuned to the dangers of dualisms" (p. 95). She argues that dualisms such as those which claim that "either our identities are independent of our ends, leaving us totally free to choose our life plans, or they are constituted by community, leaving us totally encumbered by socially given ends" (p. 93), do not serve well the cause of developing a morally superior theory of political and social association. The separation of these perspectives has obscured the potential contribution which each perspective can bring to the question of political theory. She agrees that communitarians can potentially assist in the creation of a politics which combines communal and liberal values, but argues that this has not yet been done, because they have failed to develop the constructive potential of their theory. She claims that the road to reconciliation will be paved by an intention "to realize not only justice but community through the many social unions of which the liberal state is the super social union" (p. 95). This will require, for instance, a search for ways that communities and democracy can work without oppressing individual rights. She calls for a communitarian theory of social and political association which "is not to replace liberal justice, but to improve it" (p. 96).

Gutmann (1987) also sees a need to forge a middle ground for education that makes such ideological extremes reconcilable. Aspects of meritocracy, which rewards those with most ability or willingness to learn are co-existing with the equalization principle, which aims to reduce the gap between most and least advantaged students. She advocates careful consideration "of education as a means of creating (or re-creating) cohesive communities and of fostering deliberative choice without elevating either of these partial purposes to an absolute or overriding end" (p. 46). This is possible she claims, if educators attend to both nonrepressive and nondiscriminatory notions in their educational deliberations. Nonrepression might mean that rational consideration of different conceptions of the good society is accepted and nondiscrimination might mean that efforts are consciously taken to ensure that no one is excluded from the opportunity of attaining an education that will prepare them for meaningful citizenship participation.

In CIVITAS: A Framework for Civic Education (Quigley & Bahmueller, 1991), the ideological tension that Gutmann describes is called civic virtue. Civic virtue is the dialectical relationship between values of the public good and values of freedom, diversity, and individual rights. This approach calls for compromise and tolerance amongst citizens so that "individual rights are viewed in light of the public good and that the public good includes the basic protection of individual rights" (p. 12).

Although scholars such as Barber (1984), Carnoy and Levin (1985), Gutmann (1985/1994; 1987), Bricker (1989) and Tarrant (1989) have identified these societal tensions and linked them to education, there have been few attempts to take the pulse of the classroom in a way which begins to explain these tensions from the perspective of the teacher. Bricker's (1989) work is probably the most well known, but it explores the liberal egalitarian influence on the classroom and does not seek to understand other political perspectives. There are many stories from a diverse range of teachers which need to be listened to before it can be said that teachers' voices about citizenship education have been heard. Apart form Wood's (1992) book, we do not have studies which engage in classroom based research with teachers who lean towards communitarian values and his purpose was not to explore the communitarian political philosophy of teachers. Teachers with a communitarian ideology have an important contribution to make to our understanding of citizenship education because they hold a different set of values about the ways and reasons for social association. Research is needed to discover what the broad ideals that communitarian political theorists advocate might look like in the classroom.

Citizenship Education as Relational Community

Citizenship education as it is currently conceptualized has failed to take hold in the schools and has failed to meet the goals which were set out for it by the National Council of Social Studies (Kaltsounis, 1994). Feminists scholars are calling upon us to reconsider the language and intention of civic education (Oliner, 1983; Pateman, 1989; Noddings, 1984, 1987, 1992). Noddings (1992) believes the emphasis should be shifted away from citizenship to social life so as to allow women's voices to be heard. Oliner (1983) shows that citizenship education has been too strongly influenced by political perspectives and calls for a form of thinking that puts community into citizenship education so as to return to an education which deals with peoples' relationships with one another. Marilyn Friedman (1992) cautions that feminist political theory which emphasizes community notions by focusing upon the home, family, and neighborhood may serve to perpetuate gender inequality by remaining focused upon aspects of women's lives in which they remain oppressed. Although this caution may be applicable to political theory, I believe it is worth exploring the meaning of community as an alternative way of focusing our thinking about citizenship education, as long as we are cautious of the possibilities of gender oppression.

It is my belief that the metaphor of community, which Oliner and others (Friedman, 1983; Wood, 1992) advocate for education, holds promise as a way to hear the stories of teachers (many of them women) who hold an alternative belief about how to live and work with students in classrooms in a way that contributes to a new kind of citizenship education. It may serve to broaden the traditional notion of civic education which is politically oriented, unconnected to classroom practice and patriarchal, into a more practical and concrete form of education for social life which is relational, caring and other-centered (Oliner, 1983; Friedman, 1983; Noddings, 1992). But what are the historical roots of the community metaphor and how do they speak to a form of civic education which is communitarian?

Although we have traced the political origins of the communitarian philosophy to the Hegelian tradition, the community metaphor can also be found in sociology and social philosophy. The historical roots of the community metaphor can be found in the work of Ferdinand Tonnies (1887/1957), who wrote about the dual notions of gemeinschaft (community) and gesellschaft (society). Tonnies explained these two ideal types of relationships as follows:

> All intimate, private, and exclusive living together.... is understood as life in Gemeinschaft (community) (p. 33). . . . In Gemeinschaft with one's family, one lives from birth on [in]. . . the domestic Gemeinschaft, or home life with its immeasurable influence upon the human soul. . . . There exists a Gemeinschaft of language, of folkways or mores, or of beliefs. . . of ownership in fields, forest, and pasture. . . . In the most general way one can speak of a Gemeinschaft comprising the whole of mankind (sic), such as the church wishes to be regarded (p. 34). . . . Accordingly, Gemeinschaft should be understood as a living organism (p. 35).
>
> Gesellschaft (society) is public life-it is the world itself (p. 33). . . . One goes into Gesellschaft as one goes into a strange country. . . . Gesellschaft exists in the realm of business, travel and sciences. . . . Human Gesellschaft is conceived as mere coexistence of people independent of each other (p. 34). . . . Gesellschaft is transitory and superficial. . . . Accordingly. . . Gesellschaft [should be understood] as a mechanical aggregate and artifact (p. 35).

Gemeinschaft according to Tonnies, exists "wherever human beings are related through their wills in an organic manner and affirm each other" (p. 42). It can exist in the form of blood/kinship ties, place/neighborhood ties, or mind/friendship ties. A gemeinschaft of blood is a "unity of being" which only family members can accord to one another because they are involved in "the closest and most intimate [form of] relationship" (p. 43). It creates a sense of comforting 'we-ness' for its members. A gemeinschaft of place is based on "common habitat" which is established through common contacts that "necessitate co-operation in labor, order, and management" (p. 43). Places where people habitually gather together such as schools, neighborhoods and other work-places would enable this form of collective 'we' to emerge from what would otherwise be an 'I'. A gemeinschaft of mind is represented through "sacred places and worshiped deities" (p. 42), and exists independently from ties of kinship and neighborhood. It draws its beingness from "a common mentality" and those who live this form of gemeinschaft are "everywhere united by a spiritual bond and the co-operation in a common task" (p. 43). This latter form of 'we-ness' is the ultimate form of community which Tonnies sees as "truly human and supreme" (p. 42). Tonnies argues that gemeinschaft is the relational glue which holds people together harmoniously when times are difficult and filled with conflict, and as such it is an important state of mind for societal relations. Gemeinschaft tends to be characterized by a natural will to associate with one another "as friends do, because they think the relation valuable as an end in itself" (Loomis & McKinney, 1957, p. 5). Tonnies saw this natural will as typically more feminine than masculine.

Gesellschaft, on the other hand, only superficially resembles gemeinschaft's unity. Although both deal with relations in which "individuals live and dwell together peacefully, . . . in the Gesellschaft they are essentially separated in spite of all uniting factors" (p. 65). The will and spirit of unity in gemeinschaft is replaced in gesellschaft by a desire to do nothing for the other unless an equivalent or better action is given in return. The individual will not act to support or affirm the other unless this helps to further his or her own self-interests. Gesellschaft is more likely to be based on rational will, which Tonnies sees as an artificial form of thinking that "is the human 'I' "(p. 104). In this form of will, "a group or relationship can be willed because those involved wish to attain through it a definite end and are willing to join hands for this purpose" (Loomis & McKinney, 1957, p. 5). The relationship exists therefore, not for the sake of a "we-ness" of being with others, but to achieve something for the "I". Tonnies saw rational will as a trait which was typically more attributable to males than females.

Tonnies used these concepts to show the way that values have shifted further and further away from community as humans changed from a hunter-gatherer, to an agricultural and finally to an industrial society. His work was written at a time when gesellschaft was flourishing unquestioned and was displacing gemeinschaft forces. Since he was the first to deeply critique gesellschaft, his work stands as testimony to his vision of being able to make predictions about the negative societal forces of industrialization and modernity which we can so clearly see today (Orr, 1992). Although other intellectuals such as Confucius, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and Hegel had written works before him that spoke to aspects of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft, it was Tonnies who is known for his depth of critique of the gesellschaft way of being (Sorokin, 1957, p. viii).

Tonnies's notions of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft provide useful metaphors for examining community in classrooms because they identify salient features of relationships which distinguish unified and harmonious communities from those which might be more artificial and individualistic. Although these are ideal types which do not exist in their pure forms, they provide a conceptual framework for thinking about classrooms that allows us to explore the type of will that exists there and the forms of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft which are lived out amongst students and their teacher. They allow us to ask if classrooms can be places where students and teacher can develop relationships that are based on family values through co-habiting in a common place. If classrooms can develop aspects of gemeinschaft of family and of place, they might also be able to develop aspects of gemeinschaft of mind. Finally, the community metaphor also allows us to explore aspects of gesellschaft that may be competing for space in this classroom and to ask what this means for relationships in community.

Maurice Friedman (1983) has furthered Tonnies's notions of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft to try to understand what he calls "the reality of the between," which is the relationship that comes about when individuals associate with one another. He does this by conceptualizing and exploring two kinds of community: "community of affinity" and "community of otherness." A community of affinity is based on peoples' commonalities or their likemindedness, such as might occur amongst people who share the same nationality, language or political ideology. A community of otherness, on the other hand, "does not mean that everyone does the same thing. . . [nor] do they do it from the same point of view" (p. 135). A community of otherness is characterized by "people finding themselves in a common situation-a situation which they approach in different ways yet which call each of them out" (p. 135).

The ontological basis for a community of otherness is a common concern to care for the other as they are and for what they are. Friedman claims that community of otherness exists as a dialectic between faithfulness to, and autonomy from the other. This cannot happen, he argues, unless there is mutual confirmation and trust of the other. It is a lack of trust which he sees as the main reason for people adhering to communities of affinity or likemindedness.

Friedman, as the major translator of much of Martin Buber's writing, drew upon Buber's notion of "the great community" in conceptualizing his metaphor of community of otherness. Buber wrote,

> [The great community] is no union of the like-minded. . . but a genuine living together of persons of similar or complementary natures but of differing minds. . . . What is called for is. . . a living answering for one another. . . not effacing the boundaries between the groups, circles, and parties, but communal recognition of the common reality and communal testing of the common responsibility (cited in Friedman, p. 155).

Buber and Friedman both add to our notion of community by calling upon us to be aware of the need to move beyond the like-mindedness of affinity and to ask ourselves how we can relate to those who do not share our ideological perspective and to confirm their otherness. They help us ask the question of what kind of caring can exist in classroom communities when people move from needing total agreement on a perspective, to a position where they can allow for each others differing points of view. They also help us ask how people can confront their differences in classrooms and still co-habit in community with others.

We can now see some of the historical roots to the thinking of communitarian scholars who have called for a civic education which is relational and caring (Noddings, 1984, 1987; Oliner, 1983) and includes discussion of the home, the family, intergenerational life, self, spirituality, gender, and love (Noddings, 1992). Such a pedagogy would bring together the public and the private (Pateman, 1989, Franzosa, 1988), and would pursue a classroom interaction that contributed to dispositions of cooperation rather than individualism (Noddings, 1987).

Few studies have sought out and told the stories of classrooms which Oliner and others have called for and linked them to the story of citizenship education. George Wood's (1992) five year study, Schools That Work: America's Most Innovative Public Education Programs is a notable exception. Wood set out to find and tell the stories of classrooms and schools in which education for democracy was flourishing. He did this as part of a qualitative study involving classrooms in eight American schools, spanning a range of regional and grade differences. He sought out classrooms which were attempting to educate students to be democratic citizens in spite of the pressures of accountability and standardization that were looming around them. He succeeded in identifying some exemplary schools which hold great promise as places where education is carried out in a communitarian way. By focusing upon school climate, life in the classroom, the formal curriculum, and relationships with the surrounding community, Wood illustrates a number of schools and classrooms which are educating for democracy in a way that cherishes the common good. These schools are places which seek to eliminate competitiveness and other barriers which fragment community by aiming to be both compassionate and connected to childrens' daily lives.

The schools which Wood studied were marked by several similarities related to climate, classroom life, curriculum, and school-community connections. He found a sense of community to be nurtured by a school climate in which: 1) physical and interpersonal relationships are "open and comfortable," 2) students have "broader and deeper control over their lives in school," and 3) students can feel they are part of a "community of memory and hope" (p. 118) that comes about by being part of working together with others towards a common goal. A sense of "commitment and conviction" was found to exist in schools (p. 163) which nurtured classroom life that was purposeful, built upon a curriculum which responded to childrens' interests, and engaged children in learning which was active and cooperative. Curriculum was made meaningful in these schools by connecting it to the lives of students so that they could make sense out of, and contribute to, the world around them. They have learned "through extended effort, in concert with others, on topics that mattered" (p. 200). The notion of "true neighborhood schools" (p. 224) as an integral part of the community was nurtured in the schools which Wood portrays as they actively promoted a vision of the surrounding community as vital to the classroom, and as children concomitantly worked for the betterment of their communities.

Wood's purpose was to investigate some positive models of what classrooms could be like in other places. His work makes an important contribution to the promising link between citizenship education and classroom life and begins to explore the community metaphor by examining how it is lived out in the actions of exemplary teachers. This study provides a valuable background for research in communitarian classrooms, but more work is needed if we are to understand the place of commmunity as a metaphor for classroom-based citizenship education. An understanding of community must be linked to the personal practical knowledge and the political and civic education beliefs of teachers.

Oliner (1983) claims that we must put community into citizenship education, and argues that citizenship education has typically focused too much attention upon the nation-state. This has resulted in an over-emphasis upon the relationship of people to their government and an under-emphasis upon their relationships with each other. She claims that students' relationships with each other are of primary importance and must be moved beyond the simple awareness of and compliance to accepted classroom norms and rules. She says:

> Cooperation and reciprocity are fundamental ways of organizing social relationships and communities could simply not exist without them. But relationships based on nothing more than cooperation, reciprocity, interdependence and exchange can result in exclusion and alienation. . . . An integrated society also requires social interactions in which the basic relationship is persons to each other, and which are characterized at least some of the time by "self-transcendence". . . . [Such] prosocial behaviors are those activities which are undertaken on behalf of others without expectation of reward (Oliner, p. 73).

Oliner goes on to identify some prosocial behaviors that might be found in classrooms, such as helping people with physical tasks or lending emotional support to those in need by asking them what the matter is if they appear distressed. Her goal of putting this form of prosocial community into citizenship education provides a way for us to begin to conceptualize how such behavior might be lived out in classrooms. It allows us to ask how we might explore more closely what form this caring could take in classrooms, and what level of understanding students might have of the meaning and importance of this form of community responsibility for their own education as citizens.

Noddings (1992) is also intent upon exploring the meaning of caring in citizenship education. Although she does not specify community, she challenges us to expand our conception of citizenship by calling it social life and including within it, women's ways of knowing and being in the world. She claims that a women's perspective on citizenship would place more emphasis upon private life such as family membership, homemaking, and intergenerational life, and would include a study of self and spirituality. Like Oliner, Friedman and Tonnies, she sees love and caring as central topics for consideration and pushes us to see the private life along with the public in our work in citizenship education.

Community approaches in classrooms also call upon us to remember the societal and educational tensions which exist between individual and collective rights and responsibilities. Tonnies sees this as gemeinschaft and gesellschaft, Friedman and Buber see it as affinity and otherness, feminists see it as the struggle between the private (female) and the public (male) views of the world, Bricker and political theorists like Tarrant (1989) see it as the tension between traditional liberal and communitarian values.

Schools are places where the societal tension between these aspects of liberalism and community are very evident (Carnoy & Levin, 1985; Bricker, 1989). Teachers must deal with the conflicting demands of social movements that aim to make society a more equitable place while they deal also with the continually changing demands of the business world which calls upon schools to serve simply as a place which trains a specific work force. We can see such contrasts as the ideological extremes of competitive-individualism and cooperative-communalism in classrooms (Noddings,1987), and must recognize the pedagogical dilemma that teachers face with regards to these differing tendencies. An exploration of classroom community allows us to ask how classroom teachers can provide spaces for both autonomy and communalism and whether they should. It allows us to also explore how teachers cope with these extremes in their work.

I believe the metaphor of classroom as relational community is a powerful means for understanding how teachers with a communitarian perspective live out their classroom story, because it encapsulates the essence of their perspectives and gives us a lens through which to gaze. The communitarian perspective offers us a fresh way to look at the moral and the private, which Finklestein (1988) has identified, and to explore how these aspects of citizenship education are embodied in teachers' practice. It allows us to seek out stories of intimacy and caring that are traditionally de-valued in lieu of more political, impersonal and distant academic civic rationales. It also assists us in considering the more informal aspects of classrooms that so powerfully shape relational dispositions (Apple & King, 1976; Noddings, 1987; Bricker, 1989), but does so in a manner which is rooted in the very phenomena that we are seeking to understand. The ethical lens through which the researcher gazes as he or she explores community has an important impact upon what is seen. I therefore explore three different approaches to understanding classroom environment in order to situate myself within a research paradigm where I feel ethically comfortable.

The Environment of Classrooms

The general effect of classroom environment on students has been investigated either directly or indirectly by a number of researchers. They have done so from different perspectives. Each has emphasized different aspects of classroom atmosphere using different language and epistemologies to achieve vastly different purposes. Social psychologists (Moos, 1979; Walberg, 1979; Chavez, 1984; Fraser, 1989) have taken a quantitative approach and focus upon discrete generalizable measures of social interaction, usually for the purpose of correlating them with student achievement. Another perspective views environment as a hidden curriculum (Jackson, 1968), often engaging in social critique of the educational situation (Apple & King, 1976; Giroux & Penna, 1988). They focus upon a holistic, process-oriented description of individual classrooms to determine the impact of the hidden curriculum upon the formation of student dispositions and attitudes. A third perspective is the personal experience approach which seeks to understand the classroom environment from a personal and practical stance. These researchers engage teachers in reflection on their work (Clandinin, 1985; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; Elbaz, 1983; Greene & Weade, 1985; Janesick, 1982) or present teachers' own reflections and published accounts of their practice (Lampert, 1985; Duckworth, 1986; Paley, 1986; Seabrook, 1991).

I am drawn to this environment literature as a way to better understand the relationship which I perceive to be important between the regular every day routines, rhythms (Clandinin & Connelly, 1986b), and relationships of classroom life and the dispositions which they teach us for living more harmoniously in community with others, both inside and outside of classrooms.

Classroom Environment as a Social-Psychological Phenomenon

The official published conception of classroom climate is decidedly quantitative and psychological and paints an impersonal picture of life in classrooms (Moos, 1979; Walberg, 1979; Chavez, 1984; Fraser, 1989). It does not remind me of classrooms at all, since teachers and students are replaced with abstractions of classrooms. Many of these studies start off in a rather promising way by speaking of something which seems important in the title, or stating the need for a deeper understanding of classroom life in their 'non-empirical' introductions or conclusions. But they do not provide me with the understanding I am seeking. Moos (1979) for instance, was aware that "current measures of both environment and people are imperfect . . . [and] measures of educational settings do not adequately reflect the unique environments experienced by individual students" (p. 269). Power and Tisher (1979) also write about the complexities of classroom environments.

> The mystical qualities of classroom learning environments emerge, over time, as the result of a complex series of interactions among a unique mix of persons. . . there are variations that give each classroom distinctive qualities. Pupils and teachers, for example, relate to each other and to the experiences planned within a curriculum in separate and varied ways. The challenge for the researcher is to find the distinctive qualities of each learning environment (p. 200).

But studies of this tradition measure classrooms without living within them. They have done this by using limited response questionaires *on* students and teachers as measures of their perceptions of classroom environment. These questionaires are administered by outside researchers who usually remain outside of the classrooms. When they have ventured inside they have used pre-determined behavior categories to ensure objectified observations. Such measures are based upon a systematic conceptualization of classrooms that is intended to be evaluative, causal and explicit (Walberg, 1979). Such literature has limited promise for understanding classroom community because the human element escapes description in these accounts. How can such instruments be used universally when classrooms vary so much in cultural and social characteristics? How can we examine such places so impersonally when the people living in these spaces are so diverse and have such different goals and intentions?

These studies do not provide for adequate observation in classrooms to determine the unique aspects of particular teachers' approaches to classroom community. They prevent teachers from expressing what their own classroom climate means. So the reader of this research is left without a holistic picture of the teacher and his or her students' classroom environment. Most importantly, from my perspective, this method fails to allow the teachers to tell their story about how and why they have chosen to live out their story in their own classrooms. We do not hear of the complex contingencies of classroom life which are continually deliberated by teachers (Berlak & Berlak, 1981; Lampert, 1985; Lyons, 1990). These contingencies beckon me as a researcher to look beyond these social-psychological measures to account in a more sensitive, personal, and democratic way for how classrooms are experienced.

Classroom Environment as Hidden Curriculum

A most useful concept for exploring inside classrooms was identified by Phillip Jackson (1968) when he noted,

> [T]he crowds, the praise, and the power that combine to give a distinctive flavor to classroom life collectively form a *hidden curriculum* which each student (and the teacher) must master if he is to make his (sic) way satisfactorily through the school (pp. 33-34) [emphasis mine].

This notion of hidden curriculum became a means to understand the way that the subtle, implicit, unwritten norms of classroom interactions and management schemes unofficially shaped what went on in classrooms. Jackson attached new meaning to the immediacy, informality, autonomy and individuality that is characteristic of the work of teachers. He illustrated also how the continuousness and urgency of classroom events could create excitement, variety, and fatigue for teachers and children. He talked of the complex environment that is created by the intermingling of students, teachers, and their differing goals which means that classroom events are often unpredictable. This forces teachers to live with a great deal of uncertainty in their work. He concluded that much could be learned about classroom realities through participant observation.

Unfortunately, Jackson's notion of hidden curriculum has been largely used against teachers. Apple and King's (1976) description of socialization in a kindergarten class is a powerful example of this. They show how the use of praise and classroom rules, the control of time and of how children are to express their emotions shape the role of children in classrooms. Their description of classroom life based upon actual classroom observations reveals how teacher authority, the form of activities which are permitted, the type of comments which the teacher makes, and the nature of personal interactions allowed, define and give meaning to the classroom environment. They portray teachers as perpetrators of a controlling hidden curriculum that prepares students to conform to an undemocratic school system. If I was a teacher being researched by this method I would feel a sense of betrayal by the researchers because they make no effort to give reasons for their interpretations from the teacher's point of view. So, although they address some of the aspects of the hidden curriculum which have an impact on children, they do so in a way that makes me feel ethically uncomfortable.

Giroux and Penna (1988) see the hidden curriculum as "the unstated norms, values and beliefs that are transmitted to students through the underlying structure of meaning and in both the formal content [sic] the social relations of school and classroom life" (p. 23). They argue for a different kind of approach to education that overcomes what they see as the conservative status quo. They claim that teachers "will have to develop very specific classroom processes designed to promote values and beliefs which encourage democratic, critical modes of student-teacher participation and interaction" (p. 34). As much as I agree with Giroux and Penna, and Apple and King that teaching which is undemocratic for students is problematic, I cannot agree with their research agenda which is itself uncommitted to the democratic process.

The hidden curriculum researchers go further than the social psychological approach in explaining classroom reality by spending time in classrooms, but fail to give voice to teacher perspectives on classroom environment. What is needed is an approach which explores the reality of classrooms through this interpretive methodology but does so from a view that is more representative of teacher concerns. Use of a personal experience approach (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994) which combines classroom observation with the teacher's voice is more likely to capture classroom reality. I find myself agreeing with this research tradition as it questions our ethical and moral right to examine classrooms from a researcher-dominated perspective that denies teachers' a voice in accounting for their actions (Noddings, 1986; Cochrane-

Smith & Lytle, 1990; McKay, 1990; Elbaz, 1991).

Classroom Environment as Personal Experience

Many personal experience research studies discuss aspects of the environment of classrooms, but do so from the perspective of those who live within classrooms. They portray complex facets of classrooms, suggesting the atmosphere of classrooms to be cluttered with the personal and the social.

Valerie Janesick's (1982) ethnographic study of Ken's classroom explores his classroom perspective. Through participation in the activities of Ken's classroom she came to understand the importance he placed in "creating and maintaining a group in order to achieve classroom goals" (p.162). She identified how his perspective was lived out in his practice and resulted in careful construction of activities that resonated with his belief in respectfulness and cooperativeness. His unwavering commitment to his desire for a cooperative group is a powerful example of the impact that a teacher's beliefs may have upon the shaping of embodied narratives. It shows also the importance of seeing and researching the classroom as "a social system with a life of its own," (p.161) which is an integral part of the community of the classroom.

Magdalene Lampert (1985) reflects upon a classroom management problem in her own classroom and describes how all the possible solutions to this problem only led to further problems. Her study shows how solutions to personal tensions and conflicts in the classroom environment are dilemmaladen. Instead of eliminating classroom conflicts, she shows that avoiding them avoids further conflict but does not solve them. Choosing between conflicting dilemmas is seen as less desirable than managing them. Her ambivalence speaks powerfully to the conflict within herself to choose between freedom and order in an uncertain classroom atmosphere.

> I did not want to be a person who treated girls unequally. . . . Nor did I want to be someone who gave special attention to girls just because they were girls. I did not want to be a person who had such a preoccupation with order that I discouraged enthusiasm. Nor did I want to try to do my work in a disorderly classroom. The person that I wanted to be - this ambitious self-definition - became a tool to enable me to accomplish my pedagogical goals (p. 184).

Lampert's work reminds us of the complexities of classroom life and calls for research into classroom community which is cognizant of the many possible dilemmas that shape teachers' classrooms.

Ginny Seabrook's (1991) research into her own teaching is very revealing of how the atmosphere of her classroom was dramatically transformed when she attempted to implement a workshop approach in her grade seven social studies class. She shows how she relinquished some of the control so that her students made more decisions through free thinking and group work.

> I was surprised to learn that I could step out of the center of the class and still find my place in the group. . . . The atmosphere of the classroom was different from that of the year before. Students were talking more, asking more questions, and showing more evidence of thinking (p. 481).

She explains how stepping back and becoming curious and respectful of her students' thoughts and actions helped her learn a great deal more about them and their needs. She spoke of the classroom as having an 'open space' where "long hidden thoughts would be formed into new ideas, where I would have to remember more than ever what it felt like to be a student, where I would create space for thinking and listening, and where I would learn how to learn again" (p. 485). Her image of open space is embodied in how she lives her story of classroom atmosphere as part of her evolving teacher story. She helps us see how the images which teachers hold guide the living of their classroom stories and how it is that classrooms in turn can shape student-student and student-teacher interactions.

Vivian Paley's (1986) work in her own classroom is instructive of the way that standard interpretations of young children's thinking based upon adult logic may be quite unsuitable for understanding what children are actually thinking and for guiding their classroom actions. By expressing curiosity and genuine interest in what children think and say from their perspective, she calls for a pedagogy which is sensitive to their world. This requires responses which are contingent upon students' emerging interests, moods and thoughts and are sensitive to emerging contextual realities. Such a pedagogy calls for a classroom that is designed and managed very differently than the traditional one and calls for the teacher to hold a vastly different image of classroom social structure and environment. Close attention must be paid to the stories of children that emerge in classrooms and we are reminded of the importance of teacher-student social interactions that develop from embodied narratives.

These studies engaged teachers in collaborative research of their own classrooms or were conducted independently by teachers. They all show the benefits of listening more closely to the voices from within classrooms that tell us stories of what it is like to live there. We learn of the importance of a teacher's beliefs in shaping how they live out their life in the classroom (Janesick, 1982), the complexities of classroom climate (Lampert, 1985), the interrelationship between a teacher's image of her work and the type of personal interactions that occurred in her classroom (Seabrook, 1991), and the importance of keeping the perspectives of children in mind when we explore classroom environments (Paley, 1986). These studies explore classroom life in a way which allows the reader to hear what is going on in classrooms from the perspective of those who live there as opposed to research which hears only the voice of the researcher. Research of this ilk may allow us to more authentically and *ethically* express grass roots issues that are meaningful, practical, and significant for those who live in classrooms and seek to better understand ways to help children experience classroom life in a caring and responsible way.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have explored the struggle for voice in citizenship education, showing the need to hear the voices and the embodied narratives of teachers in this discourse. After outlining some of the main arguments in the liberal-communitarian political debate, I made a case for a more thorough exploration of communitarian teachers' perspectives about citizenship education. The metaphor of community is put forward as an approach to citizenship education which is less patriarchal and political and more feminine, relational and caring. Finally, I examined classroom environment as a social-psychological phenomenon, as hidden curriculum and as personal experience in order to show why the personal experience approach is the research paradigm with which I feel most ethically comfortable.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

The metaphor of "community conversation" and our search to understand Marlene's classroom through the metaphor of community were the two main themes driving our research. After introducing the connection between knowledge and personal experience, I explore how personal experience methods informed this collaborative inquiry. I then explain the ethics which guided this work, develop the story of my collaborative relationship with Marlene from its initial stages, and show how the research process unfolded. I end with a summary of the field texts which I gathered.

Teachers' Knowledge as Personal Experience

Recent research on teachers' knowledge attempts to present teaching "from the inside," (Elbaz,1991, p. 1) which offers a useful means of examining the complexity of what teachers do. It has been called practical knowledge (Elbaz, 1983), personal practical knowledge (Connelly & Clandinin, 1985, 1988), pedagogical content knowledge (Gudmundsdottir, 1991), and knowledge-in-action (Schon, 1987). Although these researchers approach teacher knowledge from differing perspectives, the practical aspect of teachers' work is of interest to them all.

Practical knowledge represents "those beliefs, insights, and habits that enable teachers to do their work in schools . . . [and] is time bound and situation specific, personally compelling and oriented toward action" (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986, p. 512). Teachers use their practical knowledge "to express purposes, give shape and meaning to their experiences, and structure social realities" (p. 513).

Connelly and Clandinin (1985) see teaching and learning as "knowing actions", which express teachers' personal practical knowledge. They see this knowledge as "on call. And . . . experiential, embodied, and reconstructed out of the narratives of a user's life" (p. 183). Connelly and Clandinin have drawn upon Geertz's (1973) notion of anthropological inquiry which is "our own construction of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to" (p. 9), to frame their work in schools. As a means of figuring out teachers' personal practical knowledge, the narrative mode of knowing sees knowing itself as an experience.

> Action and knowledge are united in the actor, and our account of knowing is, therefore, of the actor with her personal narratives, intentions and passions. This practical knowing of teachers and students is complex because it embodies in a history, in the moment and in an act, all modes of knowing aimed at the particular event that called for the teaching and learning act (Connelly & Clandinin, 1985, p. 178).

Johnson (1989) adds that embodied knowledge must also be considered when explaining the personal practical knowledge of teachers. He sees practice as involving "bodily perceptions, motor skills, action patterns, and spatio-temporal orientation" (p. 366) and embodied knowledge as the foundation upon which narratives of experience are constructed.

> To the extent that individuals are engaged in constructing and revising ongoing narratives, their self-understanding and their knowledge of their world is inextricably tied to patterns of their embodied experience. Consequently, if we are to explore teachers' knowledge at the level of narrative, we must also trace out the bodily dimensions of narrative (p. 374).

I was interested in Marlene's teacher knowledge because it provides a useful way to understand how she makes sense out of her classroom practice. I was also intent upon using a research method which valued and gave voice to the important work which is carried out in classrooms. For these reasons, I was drawn to the personal experience research literature in which narrative inquiry is situated.

Why Personal Experience?

The personal experience approach (Clandinin and Connelly, 1994), or narrative inquiry, as it is also called, is increasingly used to investigate and portray teachers' knowledge. In her review of the story method, Elbaz (1991) argues that "the sheer presence of story makes our research diametrically different and the presence of these stories generates a dynamic of its own" (p. 2). As I entered into a research relationship, I did so with the recognition that teachers, like all other people, lead storied lives (Bruner, 1986; Witherell & Noddings, 1991; Polkinghorne, 1988; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) in which they try to make sense out of their personal experiences by telling their stories to others (Gudmundsdottir, 1991). They not only tell stories, they also live, retell and relive them (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). As a teacher, I also recognized that the complexities, dilemmas, and particularities of one's teaching both shape and are shaped by one's stories. Stories we tell are considered as close as we can come to actual experience by Clandinin and Connelly (1994), and as a cognitive process, narrative meaning "organizes human experiences into temporally meaningful episodes" (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 1).

I recognize the power of narrative as being central to teaching (Witherell & Noddings, 1991) and feel it is an important way for us to understand the significance of ordinary happenings in life in the classroom. It allows us to make connections between teaching and knowledge and to effectively portray "data that is rich and voluminous and would otherwise be difficult to convey" (Elbaz, 1991, p. 3).

> In looking at ordinary classrooms, sooner or later something extraordinary happens; something moves us to feel appreciation, respect, anger. . . . In this process we uncover and give legitimacy to the extraordinary that is within the ordinary. . . . (p. 8) The device which allows us to comprehend the extraordinary. . . is the simple form of a story told (Elbaz, 1991, p. 9).

As a researcher, I aimed to see the extraordinary in what many teachers see as very ordinary, by observing what Marlene did and by listening to what she had to say.

Narrativists argue that story is unparalleled as a way for us to really enter into others' lives by enabling us to engage in relations with others that are more thoughtful and reflective (Witherell and Noddings, 1991). It is seen as being at the center of how we see ourselves as people, as individuals (Polkinghorne, 1988) and as communities of people (Carr, 1986). Carter

(1993) claims that stories have explanatory propositions that make them especially relevant to the study of teaching since they capture the complexity and specificity of teaching. Like few other methods or phenomena, narrative can be seen as a means by which we may capture the holistic, temporal, and personal dimension of human experience.

> Narrative meaning is one type of meaning produced by the mental realm. It principally works to draw together human actions and the events that affect human beings, and not relationships among inanimate objects. Narrative creates its meaning by noting the contributions that actions and events make to a particular outcome and then configures these parts into a whole episode (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 6).

Polkinghorne claims that the study of narrative meaning is rooted in hermeneutic reasoning, which uses analogy and the recognition of patterns to make meaning out of language. He argues that if we are to understand our existence as humans we must use this approach because it is the best way to capture "the qualitative nuances of its expression in ordinary language" (p. 10). This hermeneutic production of meaning is expressed through a research process which gathers aspects of our ordinary language system and interprets them through a conclusion-drawing framework that uses hermeneutic techniques and linguistic analysis.

Hermeneutics is the art of text interpretation, and interpretation itself "constitutes the world in which we exist" (Crusius, 1991). Yet the hermeneutics in which narrative is embedded must be more clearly defined, since Crusius tells us there are five distinct hermeneutic forms. Narrative is not *naive hermeneutics* in which everyday interpretations of an unreflective sort are developed, nor is it *normative hermeneutics* which is reserved for the religious text interpretation specialist. It is not *scientific hermeneutics* either, because this is the form of hermeneutics which seeks to suspend the interpeters' assumptions in pursuit of objectivity. Narrativists have also not been concerned with *hermeneutics of suspicion*, which has a "negative" and "undermining intent" that probes the depths of what is unsaid. Narrative remains rooted in a *philosophical or ontological hermeneutics* which seriously questions the assumptions of science and aims to explore the basis of human existence.

Narrative shares several important similarities with philosophical hermeneutics. It shares philosophical hermeneutics' claim that there is no "definitive reading" on any phenomenon, and this frees the researcher to tell stories which are heard and experienced without succumbing to the certainty of knowledge claims of positivists. Like narrative inquiry, philosophical hermeneutics is concerned with conversation and is intent upon a reconstructionist rather than a deconstructive interpretation of the world. Like narrative inquiry, philosophical hermeneutics seeks to use a vocabulary that strives to remain connected to human experience. Finally, both narrative and philosophical interpretation strive for human understanding,

> . . . in 'the between' among us, as we attempt to enlarge our horizons by incorporating the insights of the other, even as the other is challenged by what we ask and assert. Truth is whatever emerges from the dialogue, wherever we come to rest this time (Crusius, 1991, p. 39).

In my work in the classroom, I sought a methodology which would also allow for the detailed portrayal of place. Narrative, with an emphasis upon scene (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), seemed particularly suited to my endeavor. Understanding classroom community calls for an understanding of the wholeness of classrooms, yet it is also important to be aware of the particularity in classroom situations. It was incumbent upon me to pay attention to such details as I listened to and constructed narrative accounts of classroom life.

Narrative will always be open to criticism by those scholars who are expecting to hear a story of academic certainty. We must not lose sight of the fact that narrative is being used in a university context which has become accustomed to the logico-scientific mode of knowing (Bruner, 1986) as the standard for academic rigor. When teachers' stories are reconstructed in their own language from the many disparate narrative fragments which researchers encounter and are presented in a holistic manner, there is an appearance of simplicity which shrouds the complicated piecing and interpreting which has been undertaken. I must see the narrative way of knowing for what it is - a reconstruction of people's narrative fragments into a coherent whole - and not feel obligated to reproduce the logico-scientific paradigm which seems to form a subliminal standard for academic work. I must also heed Peshkin's (1993) words and respect the goodness of the research paradigm I have chosen, identify "its generative promise" and not feel I must defend its integrity.

I agree with Connelly and Clandinin's (1990) caution to those who use narrative inquiry not to feel bound to the credibility criteria which were created for other research forms, and so I have attempted to use criteria which will more comfortably fit my own work. I have chosen Eisner's (1991) criteria for educational criticism, which are structural corroboration, consensual validation, and referential adequacy, as a basis upon which I believe the generative promise of my work should be judged. His criteria are attractive to me because they are based on a view that respects the complexity and subtleness of classroom life, and humbly acknowledges the fallibility of discovering the "truth." Yet his criteria offer a sound basis upon which personal experience research can be publicly judged.

Structural corroboration is the use of a variety of data sources in concert with one another to strengthen the evidence in confirmation or contradiction of a particular research interpretation. It seeks out "recurrent behaviors or actions. . . that inspire confidence that the events interpreted and appraised are not aberrant or exceptional, but rather characteristic of the situation" (p. 111). I attempt to assist the reader in judging the criteria of structural corroboration in this research text by reporting multiple voices on recurring themes from multiple types of field texts.

Consensual validation refers to the agreement about the "rightness" of the researcher's representation of the research text which is engendered when it is read by others. This does not mean that there is necessarily agreement amongst the readers, or that a reader agrees with all parts, but that the readers, from their different perspectives on the world, are persuaded of the merit of the research text by what the researcher has had to say to them. Consensual validation calls upon the reader to ask themselves if the work at hand appears plausible and credible (Hammersley, 1990). I therefore invite you as reader to consider this as you read.

Referential adequacy refers to the quality of a research text as a piece of work that expands our perceptions and enlarges our understandings. Research, according to Eisner, must "illuminate its subject matter [and]. . . bring about more complex and sensitive human perception and understanding" (p. 113). My work will be judged as adequate if it allows you as a reader to vividly see the qualities and meanings of classroom community which I describe in a way that you have not seen them before.

The balance between a sense of wholeness and particularity in narrative accounts creates an appearance of natural simplicity which has been attacked by several scholars. Willinsky (1989), for instance, sees the narrative unity which Clandinin and Connelly describe in their research with Stephanie as only a partial picture of her story, requiring a further uncovering to begin to reveal the true complexity and diversity of her practice. Yet one of the strengths of narrative *is* its portrayal of complexity and diversity that is achievable through its natural simplicity. Narrative unity is really a reflection of the wholeness which is possible when we hear and reconstruct aspects of peoples' stories in a way that gives meaning and order to their many intentions.

Bruner (1986) tells us that the readers of narrative texts, by constructing their own meaning, make them 'virtual texts'. This is linked to Barthe's notion of 'writerly texts' which according to Hawkes "presumes nothing, admits no easy passage from signifier to signified" (cited in Atkinson, 1992, p. 8). Although there is a value in, and an inevitability of, texts being writerly, this may hide or obscure the actual texts and the voice of the storyteller. So I have consistently aimed to explain the rationale for the stories which I told and to make them 'readerly' so that "the passage from signifier to signified is clear, well-worn, established and compulsory," (Hawkes, cited in Atkinson, 1992, p. 8) at the same time that they are left writerly. I attempted to also make the stories which I reconstructed more clearly understood by applying an interpretive framework to the voices which I heard. Yet I sought constantly to have these narrative accounts do more than simply validate my own claims and meet the demands of my university audience; I sought to clearly explain what this teacher and her students were up to from their perspective. I sought to not lose sight of what Geertz (1973) says of ethnographic findings. They are "not privileged, just particular, . . . [For] to regard them as anything more (or anything less) distorts both them and their implications" (p. 23). I wanted this research to stand up as a 'microscopic' study that could then contribute to our ability to "think realistically and concretely about" and "creatively and imaginatively with" (p. 23) more broad based societal and educational concerns.

Issues such as these are important aspects of narrative quality which I tried to continually consider as I engaged in inquiry and writing. But these aspects of narrative quality were designed to serve more than my university audience. They were connected to a desire to inquire collaboratively with Marlene so as to honor her important work. In order to do this, I had to pay special attention to ethics, relationship and voice.

Of Ethics, Relationship, and Voice

Noddings (1986) calls for an approach to educational research that, instead of making people the objects of research, investigates problems which interest and inform teachers, students, and researchers. Her notion of fidelity in research is cognizant of the risk of wronging teachers and students who grant researchers access to their lives. It aims to give the teacher more control over decisions on the inclusion of findings that deviate from the agreed purposes of the research project. When I listen to the stories of my colleagues who are engaged in collaborative research I hear the ethical agonies which they endure in their deliberations and am reminded of the messiness of such work (Christiansen, 1994; Schroeder, 1994). As more and more researchers attempt to get to the heart of teachers' and students' personal feelings about their practice, the likelihood of doing personal harm increases. Extra special care must be taken to preserve teacher-researcher rapport and to make it even stronger.

> Researchers must move away from themselves as prime designers and interpreters of the motivations, thoughts and actions of others towards a more interdependent role in which collaboration, consultation, and negotiation are first principles. If they are to achieve success, they must be prepared to not only talk with teachers about practice, but to observe teachers in their behavioral settings (Day, 1984, p. 73).

We must engage in personal experience research *for* teaching and teacher education, not *on* teaching and teacher education (Noddings, 1986). We must, therefore, reconsider the intent, substance and approach of our research in conjunction with teacher needs, interests, and concerns. We must also collaboratively consider teachers' specific moral, critical and practical concerns and aim to understand them. My place in this research was not to dominate the methodological agenda, and the nature of the questions which are explored, but to share them collaboratively with Marlene. This study was transformative for my own practice as a teacher educator since it allowed me to reflect upon the personal practical knowledge which I brought to my methods courses and practicum work. It also made a difference for Marlene's practice by allowing her to see new ways of understanding her classroom community. Yet I believe that any transformation in a teacher's practice must either come from them or emerge from collaborative deliberations. It must therefore be more than the agenda of the university researcher. Research methodology which aims to be collaborative must aim to give expression to a collaborative relationship by providing space for those involved to decide their own intentions. It is through this collaborative relationship that we will begin to witness a weaving-together of university and classroom needs that can potentially address the concerns of teachers such as Marlene and university researchers like myself.

Narrative allowed me to probe the dimensions of Marlene's voice in a way that was empowering to both of us and helped us together to explicate a more authentic and contextually meaningful understanding of our practices. Voice is a notion that I feel allowed us "to redress the imbalance which [has] in the past given us knowledge of teaching from the outside only" (Elbaz,1991, p. 10). It has a basis in a feminist epistemology and implies a language which, although already present, has not been heard (Miller, 1990; McElroy-Johnson, 1993). It suggests a sense of self-identity which frees us to speak out from and with our own perspective because we realize that our ideas and feelings are important and are given agency (McElroy-Johnson, 1993). Once voices have been heard, they may be able to make more of a difference for practice.

Yet despite these empowering ideals, the notion of voice must be looked upon with caution. Both Nespor and Barylske (1991) and Willinsky (1989) have questioned whose voices are actually heard in narrative research, and who determines the stories which will be told. As the main writer of these classroom stories it became my task to consciously strive to re-present the voices of this classroom in all their complexity and diversity, and this became a central struggle in my research text construction. By hearing the voices of Marlene's classroom, I cannot claim to have heard the voices of all teachers and students. I can only claim to have heard some of the voices of one classroom.

I deliberately sought out a teacher of Marlene's beliefs so as to tell a story of a particular kind of teacher- one who I saw to have communitarian-feminist beliefs. I need to acknowledge that this is one of the issues which has influenced the way the stories that I uncovered were interpreted and valued. My own subjectivity played a central role in the research process, as it does in all human and personal experience research. As such, I sought to write my own subjectivity into the stories that I reconstructed and to wear my subjectivity "like a garment that cannot be removed" (Peshkin, 1988, p. 17), by continually acknowledging the research "I's" which shaped the research experience I was involved in. Narrative smoothing, a process of selecting and obscuring particular events and stories that are observed and told, goes on constantly in narrative research- and other forms of qualitative research- but it is what is smoothed out of the narrative which requires careful attention. Narrative smoothing and the stories which may go untold must be consciously discussed and deliberated by the researcher (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

Marlene's teacher story and the multiple voices from within her classroom are the voices of one of many classrooms which are waiting to be heard. Her voice does not represent a singular teacher voice, for there is no singular teacher voice; there are multiple teacher voices (Hargreaves, 1993).

The unfolding of our research relationship

Narrative proceeds at many levels since as the researcher attempts to understand and make sense out of the narrative of participants, she or he is also living a research story as part of a collaborative narrative of experience (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). As I began to consider what these notions of relationship and story meant as part of an actual research relationship, I was also engaged in beginning to negotiate a shared narrative unity (Clandinin & Connelly, 1988; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). I had the fortunate opportunity to be doing this throughout the proposal construction, meaning that I could start the process of collaboration from the beginning of the project, and more truly reflect both teacher and researcher concerns in the research plan. Thus I feel that the method and the nature of the question which unfolded were more collaborative than noncollaborative since they were mutually constructed before the research project began (Carson & Jacknicke, 1989). Through several conversations with Marlene before we agreed to work with each other we heard each others' concerns about the project and began to see the commonalities in our stories of practice.

Marlene was interested in the element of time, and how the project would take her away from her own work with her students and how often I would be in the room. She was concerned that the project not require her to engage in writing because she didn't enjoy this, but she indicated that she would be interested in reading what I wrote. She did not want me to be just sitting around observing her but wanted me to be actively involved in the teaching of the class as a team teacher. She discussed the key idea which would frame her theme for April to June, which was "Tolerance and Understanding." She talked about what she would be doing with it. She mentioned that she tried to learn and grow each year as a teacher and to preserve her own personal time. She mentioned these as strategies that she used to stay a healthy teacher (Journal notes, January 7, 1993).

During our first conversation about our relationship, I assured Marlene that my intention was that our relationship be of mutual benefit and that we decide on research issues together. I also indicated that it was my feeling that if I was taking up her time that I had an obligation to help her by giving back of this time through doing work for her that would free her up to talk. I stressed that I would do everything possible to not get in her way, or to be a burden on her. I also agreed with the team-teacher notion, and cited examples of things that I might do in the class. We discussed planning the spring key idea, and how I have some resources on native education that I would be pleased to bring into the class for us to use (Journal notes, January 7, 1993).

For our second meeting I constructed a summary of the dialogue from our first conversation and, upon her request, I more clearly conveyed my intentions as far as a plan of action for our research relationship. At our second meeting, this summary formed the basis of our dialogue. It was as follows:

January 12, 1993

Dear Marlene,

I feel the need to engage in a research relationship which honors the knowledge and skill of you as a classroom teacher. It seems to me that there is too much research that wrongs teachers and suggests ways that they could make things better, and not nearly enough that sees teachers as knowing, competent professionals with an important story to tell. Teaching is a difficult job, and is filled with problems, dilemmas and complexities. In our research relationship, I hope to understand the complexities with which you live, and try to convey your understanding, and mine, of your classroom as a place where children work together as a community of learners. I guess I believe that it is in classrooms such as yours that children get the real lessons that our society can teach them about the true meaning of citizenship for living and working together as a community. I hope to capture in words, some of the biographical and classroom context that has shaped and shapes your teaching and practical knowledge. I hope to work with you as a co-researcher, with both of us aiming to help each other learn about the classroom as a community. I plan on writing about the meaning you give to your work as a teacher and not to judge it from an outsider perspective. I intend to guarantee you the right to approve the *accuracy of my observations and comments, and for you to reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time that you wish.*

Things I would like to do in your classroom:

1/ Work with children on projects, hear them read, help them with editing and any other appropriate activities. 2/ Do as much of your busy work as I can, such as xeroxing, organizing things, etc., so that you will have the energy to talk to me when we need to discuss things about your classroom. 3/ Talk with some children about what they are doing in your class to try to understand their meaning of the classroom as a community. 4/ Spend some time with you figuring out how you organize your classroom and talk with you about this so that I can better understand your views on classroom as a community. 5/ Observe and describe your approach to running your classroom as a community. 6/ Become involved in the planning of your focus area for April to June so I can figure out where you are heading and how it all fits with your view of the classroom, and so I can help you collect some materials for this area. 7/ Keep a journal of my time in your classroom and have you read it for accuracy and provide you with the opportunity to note things I might miss, or fail to understand, or to suggest a different direction for me to take. 8/ Hear the stories about your classroom both past and present so that I can help tell your story of teaching through these and other means. At the same time I hope to share with you my story, so that you can better understand where I am coming from and how it relates to you and your story.

Research Schedule and Plan:

I would like to spend mornings (or half days) in April in your classroom and gradually work up to full time sometime in May, and after some time, gradually reduce the time to half time again before the third week in June. I would do this with the full understanding that the appropriate time should be negotiated to fit with your needs. I would also like to assure you that I have spent quite a bit of time in other peoples' classrooms and feel that I can make myself both useful and scarce when each is appropriate! What I mean by this is *that I will be very sensitive to making your life as stress free as possible, and will be open to either staying around longer or shorter than what we originally agree on particular days. I will go with the flow, and I am perfectly aware that this is a reality of classrooms.*

Sincerely,
Jeff

My possible imposition on her own personal time was the main concern that Marlene voiced in our second conversation and she suggested morning meetings so that she would be free to leave the school when she chose at noon and after school. She wanted to make sure that I used a pseudonym for her name in the dissertation. She also mentioned her feeling of isolation in the school because of not having people who shared her philosophy to talk to about her work. I told her that I saw myself as possibly being the listener she is missing whom she could talk to about her work. We ended this meeting with a tentative decision to work together, but I insisted that she take some time to make sure that it was what she wanted to do (Journal notes, January 12, 1993). She called me a week later and said, "I have decided to give it a whirl." And so we did.

My Perspective on Field and Research Text

Personal experience methods are heavily dependent upon the researcher-participant relationship when field texts are being created from field experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994). I sought to create initial field texts through a combination of field notes and journaling that emerged from my classroom observations. They served as interpretive accounts (Connelly & Clandinin, 1985) that were shared with Marlene as part of the first stage of the interpretive process. Our conversations, which I audio-recorded, emerged from these texts and other events which we considered mutually appropriate. We intended this to begin a dialogue about "the substance and direction of our constructions" (p. 185). Conversations were used to help realize equality and flexibility in our relationship in a manner that we felt would be difficult to do in regular interviews (Carson, 1986; McKay, 1990). We aimed to construct our conversations around notions of mutual listening and caring (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994) and to develop narratives that represented researcher, practitioner, and collaborative stories of practice.

Barber's (1984) strong democracy seems congruent with research that values teacher knowledge and takes the time to hear what people in classrooms have to say (Noddings, 1986; Elbaz, 1991; Duckworth, 1986). "Common talk" in particular seems to fit with my story of education, and it has a philosophical connectivity to the kind of classroom that I explored. I sought to use this notion to engage in common talk as part of the collaborative research process. In strong democracy, governance is "done by, not to, citizens" (p. 133) since it engages in "judgement and leads men and women to modify and enlarge options as a consequence of seeing them in new, public ways" (p. 136). As I explored the meaning of collaboration in my research relationship with Marlene and her students, I was eager to try to live these notions of strong democracy, and at the same time to observe whether they occurred in the classroom. I attempted to merge "common talk" with conversation to achieve a collaborative forum.

I also sought to understand how students saw their classroom community. This required me to think carefully about the ethical relationship I was entering with children. In order to convey this sense of ethics to the children, I explained my research plan to them at sharing time in the cozy corner, and contacted their parents through the following permission letter. All the parents returned this letter with an indication that their children were free to participate in the study.

Dear Parent, *April 19, 1993*

I am a doctoral student in elementary education at the University of Alberta and am conducting a research project with your child's teacher over the next couple of months. I will be working closely with her in the classroom, and will be exploring how her classroom operates as a learning community. During this time I would like to talk to your child about the activities they carry out in the class and how they perceive their classroom to be a learning community. I want to observe and record some of their learning activities, and to gather some samples of their work. Since I will be spending a considerable amount of time working with your child in the classroom, she/he will receive a fair amount of extra attention and assistance with school work. We expect that your child will both enjoy and benefit from participation in this project, and will make a unique and important contribution to it.

I will ensure that your child's identity is kept anonymous and confidential, and that if you wish them to withdraw from the study at any time, you will be free to do this. I would be pleased to meet with you at your convenience to discuss the project. I can be reached at 436-8342 in the evenings, or here at the school *during the day. I would like to thank you for considering this project and look forward to hearing from you. Please indicate below if you would like your child to become involved in this project.*

Sincerely,

Jeff Orr

As I worked with the children in their classroom, I observed their classroom interactions and attempted to make sense of the social relationships which existed in this community. I audio-recorded some of the activities and observed many others to try to better understand how these students were working together and alone in this community. I asked them also to share stories that represented their view of the classroom community. I constructed narrative accounts from my classroom observations and their stories which attempted to represent their view, and ours together, of how they live in this community.

I aimed to record events by placing myself as a character "in the events" as opposed to a recorder "of events over there" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 422) and to have my own narratives become part of the story along with Marlene's story, the children's stories and our collaborative story. I intended also in the tradition of Elbaz (1983), Clandinin (1986), and McKay (1990) to make reflection on the method of collaboration central to this work. I tried to story my efforts to create "situations of trust in which the storytelling urge. . . finds expression" so that these stories could be heard (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 12). This began with me being a listener to the teacher's and children's stories in an attempt to overcome the traditional silence of their voices

(Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). But I knew not where it would go thereafter, for I realized the importance of attending to "the almost inevitable redefinition of purpose that occurs in experiential studies as new, unexpected, and interesting events and stories are revealed" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 416).

As I eventually moved from the research site to the construction of a research text, I did so with the recognition that collaborative stories must not end. It was important to keep in touch with Marlene after I left the field to ensure that her interests continued to be represented. I continually strived to live up to the important but nebulous notion of voice as I engaged in the construction of the research text (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994). This required me to consider the way that teacher, researcher, and students could be heard in the research text to the appropriate amount. These stories were interpreted with a collaborative intent in the sense that I continually strived to have all our voices heard in the field text to gain insight into the meaning of our stories and to "provoke new ways of seeing and thinking" and promote "new forms of engagement and dialogue about the world we face together" (Smith, 1991). During the writing stage I became the main author, which called upon me to think anew about collaboration. I therefore had to consider carefully how each participants' voice left a mark on this work, and to try to ensure that none of us were left with too vivid or too thin a signature (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994).

The Research Experience as Lived

Once I actually began the research process, the contingencies of practice and my total immersion in research necessitated some minor changes in how we went about the daily process. By "following my nose" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), I wandered from event to event, participating as teacher in some and observing and asking questions about others. I was continually asking myself how this classroom was a community and seeking out experiences which Marlene and I felt might help us figure this out. Three different data collection tools were used: creation of field notes during and after classroom observations and participation, along with some verbatim recordings of classroom events; conversations with Marlene about aspects of these field notes that she found worthy or was interested in discussing; and informal interviews with individual children or groups of children.

My interactions with the children were diverse and wide-ranging. I sometimes helped them with math and at other times I sat back and observed. I taught them some social studies about First Nations communities, worked with some of them in their social studies groups, and observed them during whole class and small group social lessons. I sat in the cozy corner with them during the many circle time activities and contributed when asked. During quiet reading time I too read quietly. As students engaged in writing and peer editing I observed and sometimes helped children with difficult words. When it was time for partner reading I observed and asked questions. When we were doing physical education, I sometimes played with the children if it was appropriate, but usually watched. These activities provided me with numerous opportunities to find out what was going on in the classroom, and created a rich context upon which to base interviews and field notes with the children.

Classroom observations and field notes enabled me to view and record events that appeared significant. By maintaining moderate to active participation (Spradley, 1980), I was sometimes actively involved in the teaching-learning situation. Therefore, my field notes were a combination of three types. They were *condensed accounts* of what actually occurred, which I was often able to record at the time; *expanded accounts*, which were recorded after events in an attempt to fill in the details of these events because I was either too busy participating or overwhelmed by the pressing details; and a *fieldwork journal*, which recorded my personal reflections, speculations and questions (Spradley, 1980). This combined form of field notes about my observations and interactions in Marlene's classroom became the framework through which I recorded and began to make sense out of this classroom community. By writing down details of what the children were doing and my own speculative thoughts about how this classroom was a community, I was beginning to tell my own story of Marlene's classroom.

As Craig (1992) has noted, conversation provides an opportunity for the researcher and teacher to begin to explore the "dense, rich fabric of teacher experience" (p. 42), and to seek to forge a link between their different realities. Yonemura (1982) shows that conversations between educators need not be idle chit-chats and can instead be opportunities for serious explorations and reflections about a teacher's practice and its theoretical underpinnings. They differ from interviews in that there is a sense of reciprocality, in which "theory is forced to share the floor with practitioners' knowledge" (Florio-Ruane, 1991, p. 239), as one individual "gives undivided and supportive attention" to the other (Yonemura, 1982, p. 240). Conversation thus serves as a way to reduce the separateness between university researcher and classroom practitioner and to hear more interesting stories that reflect the concerns and issues of teachers.

My field notes were a means to initiate conversation with Marlene. Although we initially planned to meet and talk about classroom events each morning, we soon discovered that this was too often. Things became more flexible, and every few days, with no set pattern, Marlene would take my field notes home and read them. She would look for things that interested her and would highlight them. Usually it was my accounts of childrens' talk and interactions with each other or my reflections and questions about classroom events and issues which piqued her interest. Occasionally she would also note things which she wished to clarify with me, such as my conceptions about classroom routines and rationales. We would meet sometime the following day and engage in conversation about the issues from my field notes that she had noted as being significant and worthy of discussion. She took the lead in conversation, and I then listened, confirmed, commented, and storied along with her. These research conversations were a lot like Barber's "common talk" because they were done *with* and not *to* Marlene. They had strong democratic overtones since we aimed to come to an understanding about events and issues *together* and our agenda was collaboratively determined and lived out.

Informal interviews were conducted with groups of children, and with individual children. After children worked in groups during classroom activities I regularly asked them to join me for informal interviews about what they had been doing. At other times I took groups or pairs of children out of the classroom at appropriate times to interview them about specific classroom routines. I also interviewed each of the children twice by themselves about their general classroom beliefs and impressions. They were informal interviews (Spradley, 1980) based on questions which I decided upon "on the spot" (Schon, 1987) about specific concrete classroom events and issues which I thought would be of interest to the children. They were not conversations because I found it very difficult to shift the ownership for questioning and agenda setting away from me. Occasionally a student might independently volunteer some information about the direction for our discussions, but for the most part it was necessary for me to raise questions based on what I observed in their classroom actions. I also made a few verbatim recordings of classroom events.

Through these three main data sources I was able to put together field texts which I felt had the potential to re-present the voices of myself, Marlene, and her students as they spoke to this classroom as a community. It was then necessary to begin to make sense of what these voices had to say about community. I went through my field notes, my conversations with Marlene, and my interviews with the children and identified the most compelling stories upon which they were focusing. These compelling stories were constructed by looking for narrative fragments from these data sources which supported an understanding of our question: How was this classroom a community? The data analysis focused on Tonnies's notions of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft as a way to understand the forces of community which were at work in Marlene's classroom.

It was at this point that I began to employ the notion of "community conversation" in an attempt to portray the many stories of this classroom in a multi-vocal way. I did this by first writing my own stories of this classroom based on the data which was evident in the compelling stories which I had identified in my field notes. I then returned to the conversations which I had with Marlene and asked how I could get these texts (and her voice within them) to speak to my stories. Her voice was then woven "like a conversation" with my voice into a new text. I reconstructed her voice by drawing narrative fragments from the transcripts. This part of the community conversation represents Marlene's words, although the order is sometimes slightly altered for clarity, some words are added from other parts of our conversation to create narrative coherence, and some portions of text are omitted for clarity and brevity. I did not use dots to denote the portions of texts omitted or brackets to show inserted words because I felt it visually weakened the portrayal of Marlene's voice. After constructing these conversations, I returned to the student interviews and attempted to have them speak back to both my own and Marlene's stories. My voice is presented in normal print, the text for Marlene's voice is in italics, and the children's voices are in bold print. The result is 13 "community conversations" which re-present multi-vocal stories of community from within this classroom. These 13 community conversations represent my categorization of the stories which were recurring in our talk about the classroom.

Community conversations are my attempt to give all of us who were living together in Marlene's classroom a voice in the re-presentation of the stories of this community. I use the community metaphor to convey the message that I am including perspectives of all the members of the community in this classroom. Unlike the researcher who strives for an in-depth understanding of childrens' perspectives on their classroom by focusing upon a representative sample of children, I have decided to go for a broader perspective by including perspectives from all of the 23 children in Marlene's classroom. I do this because to me community means inclusiveness and equality, and I would not be supporting these notions if I did not hear from all the children. Equally important is my desire to hear Marlene's voice in the research text. She brought a different perspective to the research question than I did, and it is important that this perspective be heard alongside my own. The conversation metaphor is used because it conveys the message that none of our voices hold the definitive answer to the story of this community. I have attempted to re-present our varying perspectives about this community in a conversational style to reinforce this sense of narrative truth. The juxtaposition of voices of teacher, researcher, and children is intended to serve as a way to re-present some of the multiple realities of this classroom community.

Summary of Field Texts (April 5-June 18, 1993)

The following is a summary of the three sources of field texts which I developed as a result of my time in Marlene's classroom. In order to be able to separate and identify various interviews which I had with children, I have named the student interviews after the classroom event it focuses upon and/or the students' names who were involved. I have also included one conversation which I jointly conducted with Jane, a close colleague of Marlene.

Field Notes

Week 1-April 5-7, half days
Week 2-April 13-16, full days
Week 3-April 19-23, full days
Week 4-April 26-30, full days
Week 5-May 3-7, full days
Week 6-May 10-14, full days
Week 7-May 17-21, full days
Week 8-May 25-28, full days
Week 9-May 31-June 1, 4, full days (June 2, half day)
Week 10-June 7-9, 11, full days
Week 11-June 14-17, full days

Conversations with Marlene

Conversation 1- April 6
Conversation 2- April 8
Conversation 3- April 14
Conversation 4- April 15
Conversation 5- April 20
Conversation 6- April 22
Conversation 7- April 26
Conversation 8- April 27
Conversation 9- April 29
Conversation 10- May 3
Conversation 11- May 5
Conversation 12-May 11
Conversation 13- May 13
Conversation 14-May 19
Conversation 15-May 20, (with Jane)

Conversation 16-May 26
Conversation 17- May 27
Conversation 18- June 16
Conversation 19- June 16 B
Conversation 20- June 17

Interviews with Students

Interview 1- Student activities interviews, April 20
Interview 2- Student activities interviews, April 23
Interview 3- Tell and Guess interviews, April 26
Interview 4- Donald and Edward interview, April 27
Interview 5- Tanya and Susan interview, April 27
Interview 6- Edward interview, April 30
Interview 7- Emperor's New Clothes interview, April 30
Interview 8- Art and Edward math interview, May 3
Interview 9- Math interviews, 4's, May 3
Interview 10- Student interviews, May 5
Interview 11- Student creed interviews, May 6 (over several days)
Interview 12-Edward and Karne, math interviews, May 10
Interview 13- Cheryl, Susan, Tanya math interview, May 14
Interview 14- Buddy reading interviews, May 14
Interview 15- Student math group interviews, May 17
Interview 16- Student math group interviews, May 18
Interview 17- Math interviews, May 19
Interview 18- Math interviews, May 20
Interview 19-Shared reading interviews, May 28
Interview 20- Buddy reading interviews, May 28
Interview 21- Social studies interviews, May 31
Interview 22- Baby sharing, June 7
Interview 23-Student interviews, June 14 (over several days)

Field verbatim transcripts

Marlene field verbatim, April 23
Sasha's The two of us, April 24
The Three Bears, April 26
Recess rough housing, April 27
Susan and Tanya peer editing, April 27
Marlene field verbatim, May 4
Health discussion, May 18
Marvin discussion, May 25

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have shown the link between teacher knowledge and the personal experience approach to research and have explained why I feel narrative inquiry is a useful approach for research of this kind. I also explored the importance of a research ethics which is collaborative and based upon mutuality and trust, and I shared the initial unfolding of the collaborative research relationship which I developed with Marlene. Further detail is provided about the research perspective, an outline of the various types of data which were used to construct the field texts is given, and the interpretive method called "community conversations" which I developed to construct research texts is explained. The chapter closes with a summary of field texts.

CHAPTER IV

CLASSROOM CONTEXT

Introduction

In this chapter I describe the classroom context in which this study took place. The chapter begins with a description of activities that typically occurred in Marlene's classroom. I then proceed to re-present two "community conversations" which show some of the ways Marlene's personal practical knowledge shapes this classroom context. I re-construct my stories, Marlene's stories and the children's stories about the context of this classroom using the "community conversations" approach.

Life in Marlene's Year Three-Four Classroom

Between the time the entrance bell rings and the time of the bell which signals the start of the school day, 23 children filter into Marlene's classroom, socializing with each other about various home and school events. Marlene walks along with them from the outside door, engaging in pleasant conversation which shows her interest in their general well-being. They hang their coats and back packs on their coat hooks, remove their outside shoes and head to their tables to put on their inside shoes. Students who are not finished Marlene's math fact program deposit their homework fact sheet on Marlene's desk. The others sit down at their desks and pick out a book to look at or organize their desks for the day. The students still doing facts pick up their regular fact sheet for the day's review from the appropriate fact sheet basket, sharpening their pencil if necessary as they do so. Marlene signals that she will begin timing the math rows for their sheet reviews shortly. Allowing one minute for each row, she times the students as they show their skill at simple addition, subtraction, multiplication or division facts. After the five minutes are up children quickly deposit their sheets on her desk for marking and flow down to the cozy corner, find a spot in the circle and sit down for Tell and Guess.

Tell and Guess is Marlene's way of making phonetic awareness and new vocabulary development interesting and challenging. The children are divided into groups so that each individual will get a chance once a week to prepare a word from the current word family for the other students to try to guess. The word family might be words that end in "tion", have "au" in them, or some other word fragment. Students secretly choose a word derived from this pattern and develop three clues which they will give out to their classmates so that they can try to guess the right word. Children who are doing their Tell and Guess have learned to politely thank their fellow classmates for paying attention, and to wait until there is silence before beginning to give out their clues.

As soon as Tell and Guess is completed, either the year fours or threes are given a math assignment to do at their desks while Marlene works with the other group on a new math concept or on reviewing an old one in the cozy corner. The students who are working independently at their desks are asked to work with partners or they might be asked to work by themselves. Sometimes Marlene has them switch exercise books with their partner so that they can see the work done by their partner and compare their results, or she may just have them sit together in pairs or triads in case they need assistance from each other. At other times she lets them choose to work alone or in groups and puts no stipulations on helping others. Two expectations guide their independent work. First of all, they are expected to help others if they are in need of help, and secondly, they are expected to get help from each other rather than Marlene until she is finished working with the other group.

The group of children who remain behind in the cozy corner are given instruction and support from Marlene in learning new math concepts or are led through a process of reviewing seat work or homework on which they have previously worked. Math manipulatives are often used to reinforce concepts and students are given intensive small group support for their learning. After the direct teaching portion of the lesson is completed, they too return to the upper portion of the class and carry on seat work which allows them to practice a new concept. At this time, Marlene makes herself generally available and checks up on the first group to see how they are progressing. Seatwork continues until recess, and anyone who finishes the assigned pages before recess is free to go out in the hall with a math computer program to work on the computers.

At recess, all children head outdoors, unless they are not feeling well. The "Student of the Week" person, who is chosen on a scheduled basis so that everyone gets an opportunity, assumes duties of signing out skipping ropes, balls and other equipment from the class recess box to anyone who wants to borrow items. (This student of the week person also has the privilege of bringing in his or her toys and other personal possessions to display in a special cozy corner). When children return from recess, they engage in some sort of language arts activity.

Language arts activities are usually literature-based and consist of such activities as listening and/or responding to a piece of children's literature, peer editing their response for publishing and display, working in their free choice writing folders, or sharing some of their written work. Frequently the students have high quality children's picture books read to them in the cozy corner which relate to the "key idea" that is being studied. They are asked to gather around in the circle and listen to the story. Normally Marlene tells them something about the author and then reads the story through once. After a second reading she gets them to reflect on the language the author used, or to imagine why the author wrote this book. She also frequently calls upon them to consider the meaning of the book's message.

Responses to literature are not done on every book read because this becomes part of a several day editing process done with other children. After producing a rough draft by themselves, Marlene often has them celebrate their writing by reading their drafts to the rest of the class in the cozy corner. At this time Marlene encourages students to give supportive comments that affirm the work of their peers. If it is decided that this piece of writing is to be taken further, partners then might help identify words which need spelling corrections and grammatical changes. Peer partners also might comment on aesthetic nuances which would improve the text's language. They then proceed to collaboratively look up words that neither student felt were spelled correctly in their respective stories before showing Marlene their re-worked drafts. A good copy is then prepared, often along with a water color painting which illustrates their story. These finished stories and illustrations are displayed prominently in the classroom so that all may enjoy them.

Free writing time provides students with an opportunity to write stories on topics of their choice. Their green writing folders contain numerous stories in various stages of completion. These folders are for student viewing only and Marlene does not intervene in what, how or how much they write in these folders.

Physical education and music are also often in the morning after recess, and on days that these are scheduled, the time for language arts activities is reduced accordingly. Music is taught by a music specialist who teaches students recorder and choral pieces in the music room. Physical education is taught by Marlene and is run in partnership with another teacher, so the children get double the number of gym periods as are normally scheduled. When I was there, physical education was either gymnastics or indoor games such as "skiddles", which is a variation of "dodge ball" when held indoors. When it was held outdoors they learned track and field activities, soft ball, or informal playground games based on or around the climbing apparatus at the outdoor playground.

A quick handwriting practice is scheduled for the last few minutes before noon if time permits. Children get out their handwriting books and practice writing a passage from the board, which focuses upon a particular letter formation.

Every afternoon except Friday, class begins with quiet reading time. On each of these days a quarter of the children are given the right to choose where to sit for quiet reading. They choose the various cozy corners, of which there are four, but the wooden rocking chair in the large cozy corner is the favorite spot. The rest of the children sit at their tables. Books can be chosen from Marlene's extensive collection, or children can read their own books or ones they have signed out from the library.

After quiet reading, quite often time is provided for partner reading. This is a time in which students work with their peers to practice plays and performances. There are an enormous number of books in the class to choose from which are written in the form of plays or reader's theatres, or are easily adapted to be such. It is a time filled with a great deal of activity as children choose what to practice, who to "play" with, and what roles each will assume.

Partner reading is often followed by sharing time in which groups who feel ready to do so, perform their partner reading activities for the rest of the class. Children once again gather in the cozy corner and act as an audience for those who are sharing. Emphasis is placed upon supporting those who are sharing, and students are encouraged to provide positive feedback on the plays and readings of their peers.

Social studies is related to the key idea being studied and consists of either large group instruction or small group learning opportunities. When whole class learning takes place, Marlene typically gathers the students together in the cozy corner and introduces or engages students in post-reflection on concepts that are central to the theme being investigated. Sometimes films are used to provide students with experiences and information that furthers their factual knowledge about the key idea. Small group activities are the most common form of social studies learning. In these, students get the opportunity to work with the same group of children over an extended period of time to read from a text and to collaboratively teach and learn information pertinent to the key idea. A well-developed routine organizes the students so that they all know where to go and what to do during this activity.

Health is done in blocks of time over several successive days but is not scheduled regularly. During health periods, students usually are introduced to specific health issues, watch videos or experience some sort of new knowledge related to the topic. Health discussions are then carried out in the cozy corner to personalize the material and to discuss personal action plans.

Science is mostly carried out by individualized long term projects on various topics. Children choose topics of interest to them from a range of appropriate options. They then investigate, research and develop reports on these topics as part of their homework.

Fridays bring some variations to the routine of the week in Marlene's class. In the morning, all students write a home journal which is a synopsis of their personal highlights of the week. These journals are written to their parents and then taken home for reading and response. In the afternoon, Marlene's class join Jane's class, the one across the hall, in buddy reading. Jane's students are in a split year two-three class, and so there is a slight difference in age which creates a range of reading levels. Students are paired up with a partner from Jane's room and half her students come into Marlene's classroom and half of Marlene's students go in there. It becomes an opportunity for students to read with an audience and to be an audience for their partners. They also serve as teachers to the younger students in Jane's class by helping them to read and to stay on task.

Three whole school assemblies are another feature of the week. One is scheduled for first thing Monday afternoon, and the other two are first thing in the morning on Wednesday and Friday. They are an opportunity to share classroom work with children from the other classes and to see and hear the projects in which other classes are involved. A regular schedule is set up so that children from different classes share on a rotation which takes about three weeks.

These activities represent an overview of the type of activities which take place in Marlene's classroom. For a more in-depth look at her classroom we now turn to "community conversations" about classroom context. After sharing short notes to the reader to situate each conversation, I tell these stories by presenting my voice in normal font, Marlene's voice in italics, and the children's voices in bold.

Stories of Community Context

The following two community conversations "A Caring Community" and "Childrens' Literature as Relational Community" help explain some of the major beliefs which are foundational to Marlene's personal practical knowledge. I begin to show her personal practical knowledge through these two themes in order to set the context for exploring some of the many other ways in which a communitarian story is lived in this classroom.

"A Caring Community"

Note to the reader: This community conversation is told to show some of the many facets of Marlene's caring that are evident in the physical classroom environment and are embodied in her classroom actions. The story was named "A Caring Community" because Marlene saw caring as a central aspect of her personal practical knowledge and the many forms of her caring came through continually in Marlene's talk and in her practice. This story shows the centrality of caring to Marlene's conception of community, and some ways in which caring was constructed in community conversations.

I had not been in your classroom very long before I was able to recognize the strong concern you have for the personal lives of your students. Your notion of caring pervades both your classroom actions and the physical environment which you have created. These serve as both visible symbols and concrete examples of the interest you have in your students.

One of the things that I really think is important about teaching is that you are always looking for new ways of doing things. Not necessarily for change, but so that it is better for your kids and for your classroom. I am always looking to find ways that I can be a better teacher. For instance, the other day we were talking at our staff meeting about social studies. There is a different plan that some of us wanted to try next year so we could teach concepts from both of the levels we teach each year, but most of the teachers didn't want to do it. I found it really frustrating, because I felt if you don't give it a try, how are you going to know? I am very careful before I step into something, because it has to be better for my kids. Not better for me or better for the school, but better for my class (Marlene conversation, April15, pp. 5-6).

The physical environment of your classroom is a reflection of the thought and care which you have for your students. The two bulletin boards beside your desk devoted to caring themes serve as a permanent reminder of your belief in students' individual uniqueness. The words "WE ARE SPECIAL" highlight one board and the phrase "EVERY PERSON HAS A PURPOSE AND IS OF VALUE" titles the other. Both are covered with self-drawn portraits of your students which represent the fruits of a culminating activity which you initiated at the first of the year to build community.

These words and drawings are related to the "classroom creed" which is a central guiding feature of your classroom. The creed is developed collaboratively with your students over the course of the first few weeks of school. By sharing children's literature which reflects a theme of caring for and about others, you gradually build a case for children to see their classroom as a place where relationships with their fellow students are of central importance. By the end of September you had developed the following classroom creed with them which remained prominently displayed throughout the year.

> EVERY PERSON HAS A PURPOSE AND IS OF VALUE
> We believe
> . . . in being happy and helpful
> . . . in sharing and giving
> . . . in trusting one another
> . . . in a caring supportive place to learn
> . . . in friendship (Field notes, May 3, 1993, p.3b).

> ***Sasha*-We got . . . an old piece of sheet and we made a person . . . . We had to cut them out and then put our little persons all around (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 32).**
> ***Cheryl*-We are all together, and we all know that Ms.G. likes us and she cares about us. It is good that everybody knows we care about each other. All over the room it says we are special and I am special. It always says we are special. So everybody knows, there's a whole bunch of signs (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 38).**

There are four cozy corners in your classroom, which show your desire to provide alternative spaces for children to work, talk and learn in. The largest and most frequently used cozy corner is the one which is built into the north-east corner of your room. This is where you meet with your entire class on a regular basis for morning circle, story time, direct math instruction, and many other whole class activities. The "Student of the Week" cozy corner, in the south-east corner of your classroom, is a place which pays tribute to a different student each week. This is done on a rotating basis so that every student gets to be student of the week once throughout the year. They are allowed to bring in their favorite toys and family pictures to decorate this spot for the week. The "Discover Books" cozy corner is carved out of the north-west corner of your classroom by two double-wide waist high shelves. These shelves are filled with many of your personal children's books, which are arranged in numerous baskets. A bunch of oversized fluffy-soft cushions scattered about on the rug combine with student art work and stories on the walls to create an inviting ambience. The fourth cozy corner is on the south-west side of your room close to your desk. It too is scattered with pillows, and has puppets, dragons, dolls, portfolio boxes, pop-up books, and more of your children's picture books.

> ***Karne*- The cozy corner is just like we are in a living room.**
> ***Edward*- It is not like mine because we never have family talks. If something has gone wrong if the window is broken, who cares just fix it (Student interviews, June 14, p. 1).**
> ***Kristen*- We have the cozy corner, and this cozy corner and the other one, and we can read in it or we can go in the rocking chair (Student interviews, June 14, p. 13).**

Children's written stories and their accompanying illustrations are displayed prominently in the main cozy corner and the "Discover Books" cozy corner. They represent many of the pieces of literature which your students have written responses to over the past few months. Magical Earth Secrets (Burford, 1990), The Boy who Lived with the Seals (Martin, 1993), and The Snow Speaks (Carlstrom, 1992) were displayed when I was in your classroom. These collections of student work are the dominant features which adorn the walls in your classroom and they show the value you place upon your students' work. Underneath their self portraits on the bulletin boards are a number of art pictures which again affirm your belief in displaying the fruits of their labor.

> ***Tanya-*** **When we respond to books we get a white piece of paper and we copy our story on a good piece of paper. . . . Then we do a light paint job on it. We take a lot of water and put paint on it and then. . . after it is dry we will put a felt pen over our letters and then Ms.G. will hang them up on the walls (Peer editing interview, April 27, 1993, p. 2).**
> ***Lana*** **-There are some books down here in the main cozy corner and a white board and The Magical Earth Secret things, and The Snow Speaks. We keep a lot of special things down here (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 8).**

I always say to the kids, particularly at the beginning of the year that I like to come to work where it looks nice. I say I like nice things for you to have, but we must look after them. I know that they think that they are very lucky. If my things burnt down in here, I don't know if I could continue teaching. I have spent so much time, money and energy on getting my room organized that if something sent me off on long term disability that would do it. I probably spent a thousand dollars last summer. Not with books but just little thingies like shelves, little trinkets, here and there, pictures, that kind of thing (Marlene conversation, May 3, p.9).

> ***Terry-*** **Ms. G. buys things, like all the pillows, and everything. Most classrooms don't have that. She buys lots of books (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 22).**
> ***Sasha-*** **Well, I like my class because it is nice. Ms. G. buys us books for our room, buys us stuff to put in our classroom, and we got lots of friends in our classroom (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 31).**

Another feature of your classroom is the presence of three tables which serve as student work spaces. The "Friends Live Here" table has beautiful pastel writing paper, and colorful pens placed tastefully upon place mats. The "Listen and Discover" table is back-dropped by two bulletin boards which are plastered with fancy trinkets such as poem plaques, hanging ornaments, and knick-knacks. The table by your desk is scattered with sweet smelling baskets of tea, scented wooden fruit ornaments, and baskets of marker pens.

> ***Mandy-*** **Let's put it this way, if you went through the whole school and looked at all the other classrooms compared to our classroom most of the stuff is different. It is a really nice classroom (Student interviews, June 14, p. 5).**

I haven't lost anything, other than that one little stuffed animal. Last year, I had the odd thing but this year, not a thing. Whenever I add anything new, Cheryl will say "Oh!" 10 minutes in the class and she knows. "Oh you got a new this", or "that is neat, isn't that cute". And the cards that are up here are all cards that people have given to me. Friends, teaching friends, with nice little special messages in them, that kind of thing (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 9).

In every nook and cranny in this classroom are children's picture books. Shelves along one entire wall are covered with about sixty high quality children's books which are standing up on display for the students. The books in your classroom represent the most inviting and all-encompassing personal collection of children's books I have seen in any classroom. There are a number of soft cover books in your class, but the majority are high quality hard cover children's picture books.

> ***Linda-*** **Ms. G. mostly spends all her money on books just for us. If we take care of the books, Ms. G. feels happy (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 25).**

I would never buy books and not let kids use them. What is the point of buying them? That is just having a possession. When I retire I will give all my books to somebody so other kids can enjoy them, if they are still holding together (Marlene conversation, May 3, pp. 7-8). I certainly buy books that I enjoy and like reading that have a special message to them. I think that there is such wonderful literature and that kids don't get exposed to books with such beautiful descriptive language in them. I would keep books that someone has given to me that are special, but as for the rest of them I would much sooner know that they are in somebody's classroom where kids who may not have the opportunity or chance to read those books can enjoy them (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 9).

Your caring is manifested in the thought, care, time, and money devoted to the physical features of your classroom. If your possessions were removed from the room, there would be a few text books, some recently acquired math manipulatives, several tables, the small student tables and chairs, some fixed shelves, and your desk. Yet your room is much more than the simple presence of the many objects that fill it. It is something about the way they are displayed which reflects the thinking of someone who is intent upon having students feel comfortable and at home. The artifacts which fill your classroom are connected to a common theme of caring, because they are there to be used by your students and reflect a message of friendship and love (Pictures and slides, May 19, 1993, June 16, 1993).

***Mandy*- When . . . Ms. G. took down the books at the end of**

> **the year I noticed how much books she got because it mostly covered up the whole classroom. It looks like this classroom right now (Classroom 17). . . . I would know if she took down all the stuff how ugly our classroom would be. That is why I don't want to move because the classroom is so nice.**
> ***Tanya-* Last year in Ms. Alan's class when we had to take our books back to the library the classroom looked really bare because she didn't buy anything. It is not like Ms. G's because we can read lots of books. They are not really all library books (Student interviews, June 14, p. 5).**

I am always talking to my students about how important it is to me for them to have a nice classroom. So they learn to appreciate it too, and realize it is not just in every classroom. I think that is why they respect it too (Marlene conversation, May 5, p. 1).

> ***Terry-* What we have in here is always nice and you can come to school being happy instead of sad. Like if somebody beat you up or something (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 12).**
> ***Marvin-* Ms. G. always spends money for books and games and it is always fun to see new stuff. When you use the same stuff over and over and over it gets boring, so when you get into new stuff it is kind of challenging (Student interviews, June 14, p. 10).**

You make a point of expressing interest in the personal lives of your students. This was made clear when you asked the class if any of them had heard how Lana was after her fall off the vaulting horse in physical education. You brought your concern for her to the entire class when you asked if anyone had heard from her over the weekend (Field notes, April 13, 1993, p. 1). You also frequently ask Cheryl about her sister, who had been at odds with her parents and had moved out of the house (Field notes April 19, 1993, p. 2). Your caring for their personal lives is also reflected in the way you listen to whatever it is that your students have to say. When they came into class the Monday morning after their winter break you made time to listen to their stories. You made contact with them by placing your arm around a shoulder, by visually focusing on their words, and by responding verbally to their comments. This showed a real desire to connect with them and to be there for them on a very personal level before the day's academic work began (Field notes, April 5, 1993, p. 1).

> ***Donald*- We care for Lana because her leg is broken right now. We care for her by letting her do what she needs to so her leg can get better (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 35).**
> ***Cheryl*- We all have tables because at the beginning of the year Ms. G. was being kind. She wanted to know more about us so she wrote notes to us and they were on our desks. She wrote notes asking more about us**
> ***Kristen*-On a piece of paper that was shaped like an apple (Student interviews, June 14, p. 13).**

I think they will say whatever is on their mind because I listen to them. I have time to talk with them. Cheryl and those few that come every morning just to check to see whether I am here. They don't need to put their book bag in. They are just checking to make sure it is going to be the same normal kind of day. Usually I let them know ahead of time if I am not going to be here. I am never away because of sickness. I told Cheryl that I wouldn't be here Friday, but it would be a special day for her because Mrs. Horton was coming. I explained a little bit to her, so that she knew that that was coming up (Marlene conversation, May 19, p. 3).

The intimate contact which you have with your students is another important dimension of your caring. When Mandy, a student with high needs, came to your desk and read her response to The Boy who Lived with theSeals (Martin, 1993), you responded to her in a warm and personal way. You hugged her close to you as she read you her story. You smiled and softly and compassionately asked her if she thought the boy in the story still loved his family after he had gone back to the sea to live with the seals. Mandy looked up at you with her big brown eyes and nodded yes (Field notes, April 26, 1993, p. 4). I will never forget the picture that comes to my mind of Mandy reaching up, gazing into your eyes and smiling as she puts her arms around you for her daily cuddle. She shares these special embraces in a way that so strongly shows the relational bond between you (Field notes, June 4, 1993, p. 6).

> ***Mandy*- She gives me a hug, and she has a good smile on her face. When I am sad she helps me out and everything (Student interviews, June 14, p. 5)**

It is just the hugging and touching, all of it I think. Showing that you are listening, that you are interested and that you care about them. I feel that is one of the aspects of education that has changed since I started teaching. When I first started teaching a lot of the moms were at home, and let's face it when you have worked all day long you're tired when you go home. By the time they get supper, get the wash done and all those kinds of things they have very little quality time or energy left (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 3).

> ***Edward*-She likes hugs (Student interviews, June 14, p. 2).**
> ***Tanya*- She gives us a hug and that is really nice. . . . If you don't want a hug you can just tell her and she will say that is okay (Student interviews, June 14, p. 5).**

You give many hugs in your classroom, especially to Tanya, Cheryl, Mandy, and Arnold. It is also clear that you respect the wishes of some children such as Terry and Edward who do not wish to have hugs. This does not mean that you don't find ways to show your caring to them (Field notes, June 4, 1993, p. 2-2b). You show Edward you care for him by the special errands which you ask him to do for you. Terry is made feel cared for by your comments to him about his writing and math.

I am a mother or a grandmother to these children. I get called both. I think Carl, Mandy, Cheryl, Sasha, Linda and Tanya particularly seem to need a lot of attention. Tanya needs a lot, she gets a lot at home, but she still needs that hugging and closeness. Carl in the last little while wants to be hugged. He came in today from recess and he was out of sorts, and so I said what is the trouble, and I gave him a big hug. He didn't pull away or that kind of thing. You could just sort of tell that he needed it. I know Terry hates them, so I might give him a little ruffle on the head or something like that, but that is about as close as I get to him, but he gets a lot of that at home too. Maybe he doesn't need it as much as some of the others (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 4). Some of these girls even give me kisses. That is just the way it is and that is the way it is going to be. If anyone wanted to have an axe to grind with me they certainly could. I certainly leave them lots of space for that with those kinds of things. You know they are the ones that are really in need in the classroom, both academically and socially. I really think that lots of times those are the ones that people ignore in classrooms. I have a real soft spot for those kids in my room. I sort of feel that I want them to belong and to be accepted (Marlene

conversation, May 27, p. 4).

> ***Susan*- One thing I like about Ms. G. is she is almost like my grandma, and I don't get to see my grandma very often. She is. . . nice and everything like that.**
> ***Sasha*- She is just like my mom, because my mom is nice, she is pretty (Student interviews, June 14, p. 8).**

Your caring often comes out when you talk to your students in the cozy corner. Your intimacy in communicating to them came through very clearly when you began discussing the importance of learning facts and your thoughts drifted to your own schooling. The tears which you shed that day indicate the hurt which you still carry for the classmate in your own grade four class who suffered so much from an inappropriate form of teaching. Your tears were for him that day, but they were also for your own students, and they reveal the love and care which you hold for them.

> *Marlene*-I know from when I went to school that I don't agree with what the teacher did that I had in grade four. But I do know that after I learned those facts that math was much easier for me. I told you about what happened every time we got one wrong didn't I. We were. Did I tell you that story?
> *Carl*-You got a smack on the hand with a belt every time you got one wrong.
> *Marlene*-Yeah. Ms. G. got three and that was it. I can remember going home at night, sitting on my bed with my dad practicing those facts, saying never again would that happen to me.
> *Carl*-Which hand?
> *Marlene*-Both of them. But I can remember a little boy, it makes me sad even to think about it. (Your voice began to quiver). Because I really didn't agree with that. You see now a days nothing like that would happen. A little boy in my class every single day that happened to him. (Crying) (Silence)(Lorna goes and gets you a tissue)
> *Edward*-Every single day? His hands must have been sore.
> *Marlene*-That would be the same as Melinda having trouble with hers and me taking her, every day for every one that she got wrong.
> *Edward*-So when did they change the law?
> *Marlene*-I don't know. I just know that that happened to me in grade 4. . .

> *Linda*-I am glad because I have a nice teacher.
> *Marlene*-(You turned to me and said) So anyway. They are used to Ms. G. crying.
> *Several Students*-Yeah.
> *Marlene*-Aren't you? Quite often she cries when she reads books. I remember when Mrs. Holmes was here, and she was reading a book to her class, and 5's and 6's. It brought tears to her eyes, and they said oh don't worry, Ms. G. cries all the time when she reads books (Field verbatim, April 23, 1993).

> ***Cheryl*- We like having her very much as a teacher. She is just so honest, so kind (Student interviews, June 14, p. 14).**

I really feel it is important that they know that you have feelings too, that you are the kind of person that cries when you feel sad. Friends of mine often say to me. "Oh you have such a tender heart", and I guess I do. When I think of things like that math incident, it really touched me as an educator; knowing that what that teacher did was degrading to that child that whole year. I realized that as a child and thought about how I would feel being in that child's spot (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 4).

Your caring for your students' personal lives is also evident when you allow them to talk about issues that stray from the academic agenda, but are personally meaningful to them. One day you asked your students to tell you the oldest person they know so you could connect it to the concept of dinosaurs in pre-historic times. Instead, a number of children began to tell you personally gripping stories about their grandparents, so you let them do it. "My great uncle died and I only got to see him once", Susan said. "My dad's mom died when I was 6," said Edward. "My grandpa is 96," said Arnold. "Mine died when he was 66 because he smoked," said Terry. "I don't get to see my dad's grandpa because he moved and his wife doesn't want us to see him," said Kristen. "My grandpa died of cancer and my brother barely got to see him," said Kristen. You accepted all of these comments, affirming that what they have to say is important in this community (Fieid notes, April 27, 1993, p. 4).

You really need to have time for the personal. These kids come from really busy families. Their parents don't always have time to listen to them and I feel I have to make myself available for things that they want to talk about. That is why I let them get off on little tangents. It is being a little bit flexible. I know that I am going to get done what I need to get done eventually (Marlene conversation, May 19, p. 4). I think their sharing is more important, so I sort of prioritize the things that I am planning on doing, and then look at the ones that I can bump and the ones that I don't feel that I can. The sharing went on a little longer than what I had planned but it is important (Marlene conversation, April 27, p. 3).

> ***Mandy*- Every day we come to school she has a big smile on her face and she is really cheerful and she is not mean or anything (Student interviews, June 14, p. 4).**

I am also aware that your students are your number one priority, despite all the people at the school who demand your attention. When visitors come into your room, you do not leave your students unattended to talk to them. Discussions with parents, visitors and staff takes place at recess, or at other times when your students are not with you. The giving of your undivided attention to your students was an unspoken rule I discovered very early in our research relationship. When children would come into the class in the middle of the recording of our conversations, you would always speak to them. Their conversations were never cut off, hurried or de-valued at these times, and this shows that you are always interested in them and strive to always treat them with respect.

> ***Linda*- Our classroom is nice, and. . . it is special because I have been in her class for two years and I like Ms. G. better than all the other teachers, because she is nice and special, and she is always helping (Student interviews, June 14, p. 4).**

I guess I put myself in the position and ask myself how would I like to be treated? Would I like someone ranting and raving. I would be crushed. I would cry. I know that. How does it feel to be told that you did this wrong? I think that tells us such a negative comment for your willingness and desire to learn. I just look at myself and think how do I work when people are constantly telling me that I am not doing a good job? I put myself in that spot and think, how would I feel if I was treated like that? There are times that I make mistakes and I do this sort of thing and I am not very proud or happy about it (Marlene conversation, June 16 B, p. 2).

> ***Susan*- My old teacher. . . really got mad at everybody. She had a bad temper and Ms. G. doesn't have and she is nice. If you get something wrong she tells you that you are doing something wrong she doesn't get mad at us in class (Student interviews, June 14, p. 8).**

You make your caring known in a public way that invites the children to see their place in your classroom community. The day Lana revealed her re-grown hair to the class after several months of chemotherapy was a potentially stressful day for her, but you made sure she felt comfortable. It was also the first time in months that she would be going out at recess with the other children.

You made her feel at ease by publicly proclaiming these events, and commenting that her hair looked nice and thick. You told her that spiky hairdos like hers were in style these days. You helped her to make a potentially stressful affair into a warm public event. This was your way of welcoming her new image back into the community and celebrating her latest medical milestone. Her smile suggested that you accomplished your goal of making her feel at home sharing her new achievement (Field notes, April 5, 1993, p. 1).

I think that love and caring are the first important things. Students have to see that you care for them, that you really do like them and really do value what they say. They have to see that you are not just putting in time. I think that they respect the things that I have in here, my books and the special things that are mine because they care about me and they know I care about them. That's one of the first things before you can get their trust (Marlene conversation, June 17, p. 1).

"Children's Literature as Relational Community"

Note to the reader: This community conversation explains another aspect of the context of Marlene's community by showing some of the formal curriculum materials which she uses to build a sense of caring for the other. It also presents stories which show the impact of this caring literature upon the development of students' sense of caring. The title of this story portrays the importance of relationships which are at the heart of this literature-based curriculum.

I am interested in how you use children's literature to build the notion of community in your classroom. You decided to seek out many quality books which form the topics for your language arts program. These books are chosen carefully with a goal of providing a caring curriculum for your students. I see this as one other way by which you seek to insure that your students are exposed to notions of community, since these books, almost without exception, come with a message which can potentially connect to children's sense of relationship with others. This has helped you to develop concepts of community-mindedness through literature, and to connect this notion to your students' lives.

I spend about six weeks on climate building things at the first of the year. A lot of the things that I do to build a climate in my classroom are reading and responding to books like Koala Lou (Fox, 1989). That is how we come up with our creed. We talk about things that would make this a safe place to come and learn in. I do a lot of reading from those books. We talk about the stories and then we do some writing. We did "The Important Thing About Me" in response to The Important Book (Brown, 1949). We wrote about what a good friend is like (Marlene conversation, April 15, p. 4).

> ***Terry-*** **Every person in the class has a special thing. Like Ms. G. read The Important Book and it said the important thing about a daisy is that it has yellow. We had to write about the important thing about us. Sort of like the purpose about us, that we have that is really special (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 12).**

You seek to model the messages which these books hold through direct reading on your part, followed by personal reflections and responses by the students. Activities such as your literature response continually tie the stories which children read into broader personal discussions of relationships and caring. In this way, you are gradually teaching students to consider and celebrate themselves in relation to others.

We talk at the beginning about people being unique and that some of us are better at some things than others. I talk about people being stronger at some things. Some can write and some are better at some things than you are (Marlene conversation, June 16B, p. 1).

> ***Terry*- Every person is unique in a way. . . they all do things their own way. I might do something one way and they might do it a different way. . . . People can help each other do things when they are in trouble, help them. In a math question they can help you if you don't know it (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 10).**

When we read The Boy who Lived with the Seals (Martin, 1993) to your class, you asked the children to reflect upon the boy's special gift. This connects to the message you continually stress to children when you encourage them to recognize their own special gifts, and those of others (Field notes April 26, 1993, p. 3B).

One of the first things that we do to build our climate is we look at things that are different. The book Crow Boy (Yashima, 1983) is a story about a boy who is unique in a certain way. We talk about how we have to keep looking to find how we are unique and special (Marlene conversation, April 15, p.4). With

Crow Boy the biggest thing we talked about was the fact that it took so long for someone to recognize his special gift. It was someone who took the time and the energy to get to understand him. We discuss how everybody has that but we have to dig and look for what it is. Sometimes it is much easier and you know right away, whereas with other people it takes a little longer. I stress how you shouldn't give up and I guess that is how I feel about kids in my classroom (Marlene conversation, April 26, p.1).

The Rag Coat (Mills, 1991) is a special book which holds an important message about sharing and dignity. It is one of many books that you make available for the children to choose as you have them gradually construct their own relational curriculum. Your belief in responsibility to the other in community is contained within the covers of books such as this.

I can't read The Rag Coat to my kids because I cry every time. It is about a little girl that can't go to school because she doesn't have a coat. The ladies in the community get together and quilt. They all bring a piece of fabric and weave them together. The kids start to tease her when she is at school but she tells them the story of each piece of the quilt. She knew the story of each piece. It is a beautiful story (Marlene conversation, April 26, p.5).

Some of your books bring powerful messages to children about personal relationships. Personal relationships are a very central aspect of your belief in climate. Your books hold stories of different aspects of relationships within their covers and you ask your children to make personal connections to these stories.

There is much more literature now that I call memoir. Those are the kinds of books that I have (Marlene conversation, April 26, p.5). Waiting for the Whales *(McFarlane, 1991) is about a grandfather. The daughter comes back with her little child and then her grandfather dies in the end (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 5). I read* Koala Lou *(Fox, 1989) to the parents and we read* Frederick *(Lionni, 1967). We did torn part pictures with those. I thought it was really important for the parents to see that I value their child for what he or she is and not compare them to someone else (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 2).*

I look at the kind of books that I can use. For instance, A Story of Jean *(Gaitskell, 1989) is a story about a blind girl named Jean Little who kids always make fun of. We talk about that, and how she would have felt. We talk about how she got her enjoyment out of doing pictures and telling stories. That was what was unique about her. I also brought in* The Unfriendly Book *(Zolotow, 1975),* The Hating Book *(Zolotow, 1969),* Everybody Needs a Rock, by Byrd Baylor (1974), The Two of Them *(Aliki, 1979) and* The Bedspread *(Fair, 1982)(Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 1). One other thing we did is we talked about what a good friend is, and we brainstormed the kind of traits we thought were important in a good friend. We each wrote our own "A Friend Is" stories and we put those up around the room (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 2).*

The Two of Them, by Aliki (1979) is a fine example of the emotive power of many of your books. I will never think of this book again without thinking of Sasha and the day she shared it with us (Field notes, April 23, 1993, p. 2b).

She read it slowly and methodically, showing us the pictures after each page. She read it in such a way that it invited the class to join her in the unfolding of the love between this little girl and her grandfather.

Sasha always wanted to share right from the beginning. It didn't matter whether she was able to read the words. Quite often I would have a year four student up there to help her when she was sharing. I have her practice a book and then go and read it to someone in the kindergarten class. When she had the book ready I would listen to her, and send her off. By doing this, children get the feeling they are important and can do it (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 3).

Sasha read to us about the things the grandfather did for this little girl. He "made her a ring of silver and polished stone. . . covered her with a rosebud blanket to keep her warm."

As she read onwards, the love between the grandfather and the little girl grew stronger in the text and you and I were drawn to consider the meaning which this book held for Sasha. He "caught her before she fell when she took her first steps. . . sang her songs and told her stories of long ago," she read.

Sasha made us feel sad when she read about how the grandfather grew old and died. "And it seemed, suddenly that grandfather was an old man. One night he became ill, and after that, part of him could not move. . . . At night she tucked him in bed and sang to him and told him stories he had told her. . . . She knew that one day he would die. But when he did, she was not ready, and she hurt inside and out" (Field verbatim transcript, April 24, 1993).

One of the reasons I chose her to read first was because she was having such a good day. She said "You know I haven't been fighting with anyone all day." I said "That makes Ms. G. really happy." She said "I have a book ready to share," and I said "Well I'll let you share first" (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 3).

As we caught each other's glance during the reading of this story, there were tears in both of our eyes. This was partly because it was a sad story, but mostly because of what it said about Sasha. She touched our hearts that day because the story she read resonated with her own story of being brought up by her grandparents. Sasha is a troubled girl who usually remains outside of your classroom circle, and reads haltingly, but she read this story in a clear, soft voice that day. She captured the essence of this story and brought out the love the grandpa had for the little girl. It made us think deeply and affectively about her own home situation. Like the girl in this book, Sasha gets the bulk of her love from her grandparents. She is a child of an alcoholic who cannot depend upon her Mom to physically care for her. And so we wondered and cried that day, about why she chose to share this book with us, and the similarities it had to her own home situation.

Sasha would probably not have practiced and shared this book if it wasn't your desire to give everyone in your classroom the space to find a voice. The members of this classroom do not laugh at others for the choices of books they read. They are invited, but not forced, to share the books they have practiced with their classmates. Sasha experienced significant support after she had read her story. People told her they "liked how [she] talked. How she used [her] voice instead of acting it out." They also told her that her reading "is getting better [and that she] hardly had any problems, except for one word" (Field notes, April 23, 1993, p. 3b). With support such as this, she was willing to speak out and share a story which was very meaningful to her. Sasha's choice of this book had nothing to do with the direct instructional task of teaching, and had everything to do with the personal space which you provided for her to make her own choices.

It is interesting to think why Sasha would pick that book. I wonder whether it was because of her family? I know she reads that book quite often. It must be very frustrating for her as a child. It is the love she gets from her Grandparents, and it sounds to me like they are going to be there until they are finished school, which is fortunate for those kids. I don't think that I could see any hope for Sasha if she was in that kind of situation with her Mom. I don't think that she sees her father that much (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 2).

Scores of this type of book are continually displayed in your classroom, and you provide a variety of opportunities for your students to interact with them. This creates a curriculum potential which *they* make possible through their own choices, as Sasha did. If you didn't have these books constantly available, your classroom could not be the sort of relational community which it is. You exemplify a love and respect for the stories in these books which you buy for your class and are letting them know how important these stories are for you. Such materials also stand alone as enticing to children because they are high quality, interesting, and attractive, and are a solid alternative to books of less quality which do not tell a story of community.

> ***Melinda***- **I like. . . doing quiet reading because you get to read. (Student interviews, June 14, p. 11).**
> ***Laura*** **- I like quiet reading because you can read to yourself and you can learn new words (Student interviews, June 14, p. 8).**

By having those kind of books around, they are getting a message. I read and talk about the new books I get. For example, Linda did a writing response to Trees *(Podendorf, 1982) because she liked that book. She worked on that by herself (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 5). The kids are very good with the books. They aren't allowed to put them in their desk and they are not allowed out of the room. They use the books in here more than the ones in the school library (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 9).*

But without free choice times in the reading curriculum, children would not have the opportunity to read a curriculum that they constructed. If children were not able to make personal choices to read books alone or in groups, then books like this would not get the use they currently do. The fact that these books are available to them at quiet reading, partner reading, and sharing time, makes it possible for *them* to choose your community curriculum. Without the children's books that form your professional library, and the love, care and thought which you put into the construction of this curriculum, your classroom would be a very different community.

I might not look at every one of these books, but I will make a display and they can choose from there in quiet reading. We may look at one book and *work on it for a week, and do some writing with it. We probably focused on six or seven books at the beginning of the year (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 3). By giving children the opportunity for shared reading they are exposed to a lot more than if they didn't do it. They may share a book and somebody else thinks "oh that is neat, I will read that one next time" (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 8).*

Chapter Summary

This chapter describes the classroom context in which this study took place in order to help set the stage for a more detailed exploration of the stories of this classroom community in subsequent chapters. The initial section describes the typical activities which children experienced as part of life in this classroom. "A Caring Community," the first of two community conversations, shows some of the elements of caring which were evident in the physical environment of Marlene's classroom and were embodied in her teaching. The other community conversation, "Children's Literature as Relational Community," shows some of the formal curriculum materials that Marlene used to create this classroom community. The next chapter explores stories of this classroom community which are gemeinschaft in orientation.

CHAPTER V

STORIES OF GEMEINSCHAFT

Introduction

The seven community conversations in the following section explore activities and routines Marlene engages her students in to try to create a sense of otherness in community. They are titled "Weaving a Supportive Fabric," "Sharing Dark Mountains,""Bringing all Children into the Circle,""Giving Children Voice," "Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community," "All of Us are Teachers," and "Service in the Larger Community." They reveal stories of Marlene's determination to demonstrate the possibilities which gemeinschaft forces and communitarian classrooms,hold for education for social life. They also reveal students' stories in response to this gemeinschaft world.

"Weaving a Supportive Fabric"

Note to the reader: This community conversation illustrates the way Marlene deliberately sets out to model and reward supportiveness in the classroom. It also shows how children respond to this obligation which Marlene asks them to live. It is a story which reveals general congruence between her expectation of supportiveness and childrens' supportive actions. The story was named after the metaphor of "woven like a quilt" which Marlene used to describe her efforts to create a supportive classroom environment.

There are many instances where your students support their fellow classmates. I have been able to come to know this through the comments which students make to each other. They support one another because of the role you play in the class as a builder of community as you strive to help the children become more responsive to supporting one another. You ask that they give comments in support of the academic work and actions of other children so that they all feel they have a right to be part of the affairs of this classroom. You have nurtured them to see the giving of supportive comments as a norm. This would not happen if you did not work diligently to encourage and give reason for the verbal support which they give to one another. The childrens' comments show their realization that others will respond and support them in community.

> ***Tanya*- Our classroom is very special to everybody in the class because it is not like any other class. . . . Everybody is caring and they are so generous and nice to you. You just feel mostly safe there because they are not going to call you names or anything (Math interview, May 14, 1993, p. 2).**

You see it is just woven through. It is like a quilt and each little thing brings together and adds to the other ones, whether it be math, shared reading, writing and working with a partner with editing. It is just valuing what people have to say and taking their ideas and accepting them (Marlene conversation, May 26, p. 4).

During sharing, for instance, you make space for them to comment upon the work of others. After Tanya, Linda, Kristen, Lorna, and Susan had performed a play, students had an opportunity to talk about what they liked about this play. Edward liked "the way they changed their voices and the way they changed the part in the beginning." Arnold liked "how they used puppets and people" (Field notes, April 7, 1993, p. 1). Such comments provide signals to children about the importance and value of their work in the classroom. They speak of how children will be supported as individuals as they attempt to carry out creative activities in their classroom.

> ***Terry-*** **When we have to share you know you can share because they won't make fun of you (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 2).**

You just have to keep talking about things. That is why we are a support for everyone in the whole class. 'Every person has a purpose and is of value' is our general motto for the whole year. I always like them to draw themselves and attach their picture to the chain (above the cozy corner) which symbolizes how we are each an important link in the classroom. It takes all of us, not just one of us, to make a community. I do a lot of talking about that in the beginning. I always take their pictures and have those up for the year (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 2).

> ***Arnold-*** **Ms. G. shows you how to share. If you are not used to being with a partner she will ask you to be with a partner (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 11).**

Cheryl and Mandy performed a reader's theatre by taking turns reading the lines. Their efforts were supported in an especially important way. After they had made the usual comments about the techniques which were used, you encouraged the children to dig deep and tell them about their reading. Melinda was quick to say "your reading has improved," and Edward suggested they "couldn't read at the first of the year, but now they can." You commented, "I think we should really be celebrating here. This is wonderful" (Field notes, April 13, 1993, p. 3b). By encouraging them to support these girls, you made the celebration of their growth an important classroom event. This in turn is an open invitation for them to share with their community without fear of being criticized.

> ***Mandy-*** **In the cozy corner everybody is surrounding you and everything. It is not like somebody has to sit over there and somebody has to sit over there and you can't talk to each other. You all have a different chance to talk and you don't fool around that much, and push everybody around. It makes you like a family, it is like a little chamber . . . and we are all together and we are not that scared and it is like a little room and we are all surrounding each other to help us learn (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 5).**

I try to celebrate everything they do. It is just another way of celebrating what they have done to show that they have a voice and that everybody listens to them. You can tell that they really have listened because they are using words that come from people's writing. Then the students know that person really did listen to what they said and their fellow students are valuing what they are doing (Marlene conversation, May 26, p. 2).

You solicit public support for students who are going to be performing at assembly by asking the other students to make suggestions which might help improve their work when they perform it. This form of support is very constructive in nature and encourages the children to show respect for each others' work. By involving all children in the assembly preparation you are actively encouraging a wider ownership for performance that goes beyond individualism to community. When Linda, Donald and Randy were asked to do the assembly sharing, you invited the entire class to give them suggestions to help improve. Linda received comments from Edward to read "a bit louder," from Terry to read "clearly," and from Edward to read "with expression." These comments were not made in a critical manner, but were made with a genuine interest in the well-being of the performers. This was largely because you insisted that they "should be very proud of [their] work because it is very well done." It was made clear to them that they were receiving comments in support of work that was already strong (Field notes, April 19, 1993, p. 3). This is a signal that praise and the celebration of accomplishments is valued in your class. The comments which were made to children preparing to share at assembly were constructive in nature. This shows that support need not always take the form of positive comments about children's work.

> ***Kristen-*** **If I make a mistake. . . I don't want them to tell me how to improve because I already know. Sometimes when I read stories I will make mistakes and they will tell me. . . to read loud or whatever. That sort of bugs me. . . . When people say how you change your voice . . . you are happy because it was in your play and it is for you. Sometimes it could also be for props or whatever. . . . Arnold said about our trolls and dokers. I like that (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 3). . . .This year I look forward to assembly sharing because I got used to sharing with the class. It helps me at assembly. . . but last year I sorta got nervous. I didn't want to share (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 5).**
> ***Susan-*** **It makes me feel brave because if you go up to all these people, and you see them it makes you scared. But if you've done all this, if you have gone to your classroom and shared in the back and stuff, it makes you braver because you know that . . . there is a classroom up there to support you**

(Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 4).

One of the things that I work on right at the beginning is poor listening. If they do say negative statements I will just say to them that it is not appropriate and that it is not allowed in my classroom. I do this so everyone is able to share the same as everyone and say what they want to say (Marlene conversation, June 16B, p. 1).

> ***Kristen-*** **If someone brings let's say a toy to school for student of the week, someone shouldn't laugh at them and make fun of them. That would be breaking the creed (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 16). They can trust the class not to make fun of them because we wouldn't laugh and say "hah hah you used to play with this" (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 19).**

When children share their individual reports for social studies or science, you request that support for fellow students be framed as things they liked, as questions they might have, and as ideas for improving. Lorna's sharing of her project on seals prompted a number of questions from her classmates. "Where did you get the pictures?" "Why do they hunt the little seals?" and, "Where can you pet the seals?" It also drew comments about what people liked. They liked, "your pictures," "the map of where they breed," and "how you got things from your dad." But there were also suggestions for improvement, such as, "Make sure that you know the words," and "maybe use a little less pictures and secure them in a little better" (Field notes, June 14, 1993, p. 2b). These comments took place in a positive accepting climate, but by insisting conversation be somewhat critical, you ensured that they were provided with formative feedback for improvement. It is a challenge to have both affirming and constructive comments coexisting so as not to discourage children from wanting to share their work. These two types of support seem able to co-exist in your classroom.

> ***Donald*- I was doing this report on central Alberta, and I needed to bring in my finished product. I finally got it together and done, and I brought it in and Ms. G. asked me to share it. We were in the support circle down in the cozy corner, so I shared it. . . . I was quite comfortable because they were listening. You know people are supporting you and you can trust them (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 36).**

At the beginning of the year I just make sure that everybody has a voice in here, whether they are a good reader or not a good reader. I'll talk about comments, I'll add quite a few. Sometimes we'll talk about what we like about people's work and then sometimes I'll say, how could they improve this? What could they do to make it more interesting? They might talk about changing their voice and we will comment on that and then they will try to model this (Marlene conversation, April 22, p. 3).

> ***Linda*- Ms. G. talks about it every day almost from the beginning of the year about not teasing and sharing and caring. She talked about it for half the year and everybody got used to it. Then she didn't talk about it anymore and nobody was teasing anybody, but sometimes the people do and she has to tell the whole class [again] (Baby sharing interviews, June 7, 1993, p. 2).**
> ***Kristen*- Ms. G. taught us at the beginning of the year not to make fun of other people, and that if we share something. . . other people shouldn't make fun of that (Baby sharing interviews, June 7, 1993, p. 4).**

A support network is also evident in your classroom when children have written responses to literature. You provide your students with the opportunity to engage in a community celebration in support of each other's writing. After you read A Boy Who Lived with the Seals (Martin, 1993) to your students and had them write individual responses to it, you asked them to gather in the cozy corner for a support circle. They were asked to listen to the responses which their classmates had constructed, and to share remarks with them to affirm their work. Susan was treated to some very positive reflections about her work. Children complimented her on her use of language and told her that her writing was pleasing to hear. Cheryl commented that she liked how Susan "said rocky shores," and " the seaweed was forest green." Edward "liked how she said we honor her" (Field notes, April 28, 1993, p. 3). At another time, when you had the children respond to Listen to the Rain (Martin Jr. & Archambault, 1988), there were equally supportive comments made of people's work. Authors were treated to positive comments from the audience about how they liked such phrases as "It seems like the soft keys of a piano," "a soft dripping on my head," "smells like a waterfall," "dancing prancing" (Field notes, May 26, 1993, pp. 1b-3). Such comments are meant to tell children their work is valued by their classmates. This creates a public, celebratory space for their work which they would not receive if the teacher was the sole responder. It takes their writing beyond the realm of a private, individual activity and gives it a public, communal purpose. You thus call upon the writer to be prepared to contribute to the aesthetic pleasure of the community and for the individuals in the community to respond supportively to encourage this form of sharing.

I think it is just part of my creed to make sure that each child sees *themselves as unique and special. We have to accept them from where they are and where they are going. If we look hard enough there is always something good in whatever they are doing. I try to have them focus on that when they respond. I try to specifically show them how to respond with comments that tells they have been listening. I try to get them to be more specific rather than just saying I liked such and such. If they can pick out language, then they are showing that they really were listening to what was being said. I think this helps them to see a more positive side instead of a negative side (Marlene conversation, April 29, p. 2).*

When you ask the students to get into groups you usually ask them to show you what you expect as far as responsible behavior in groups. They were getting ready for social groups one day and you asked them, "What should we see when we work in groups?" Students responded with "cooperating, leaning in." "What do we do after a person has read?" you asked. "Ask questions," they responded (Field notes, April 6, 1993, p. 5b). This shows a commitment on your part to have them practice responsible group behavior with other children. You insist they be able to show you this behavior before they engage in group work and be able to demonstrate these skills of cooperation during group activities.

> ***James*- We support each other. . . by not telling someone that's a bad idea, we should go with mine instead.**
> ***Susan*- We don't yell at people or rude voicing. That is not a good idea.**
> ***James*- We put everybody's idea. . . down on the board.**
> ***Laura* - We don't laugh at anybody.**
> ***Donald*- If we don't understand someone's idea we could ask them again or ask them if our interpretation of it was right and then kind of change it a bit (Math interviews, May 20, 1993, p.**

> **2).**
> ***Marvin*- When we were doing math one day. This thing was so hard for me, and Arnold already knew it. . . . I didn't even have to ask him. He was just looking at me and what I was doing and what I was going to write down. Today at facts, when I finished he said "good." He cheered me up. . . . He always helps me now, and today in facts he said "you did pretty good" (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 27).**

You encourage the communal proliferation of ideas by sharing new ideas that children have uncovered with the rest of the class. You do this in a way which shows your public support and approval of their discoveries, and the importance it can have to others. When the class were drawing igloo figures for a geometry activity in math you noticed and publicly recognized Sasha's divergent thinking about making an igloo with modelling clay. "Sasha has an excellent idea. She said you can make an igloo out of modelling clay. See how it is when you help each other" (Field notes, May 17, 1993, p. 2b). When you point out things children are doing in your class that others can learn from, you are acknowledging new ways of seeing things. This is also an affirmation of the importance of their role in helping each other to see new things together and to share these discoveries publicly with the wider classroom community.

This is another way of having them show that they are teachers by bringing out positive aspects of what is happening in the classroom instead of focusing on the negative. It shows them that they get attention for that and not for the other kinds of things. It is harder to find things with Sasha, and so as often as I can I try to single her out for her neat ideas. She is rewarded for teaching us another way of doing something. I try to focus on these parts although it would be much easier to find the negative and make a negative kind *of climate in your classroom (Marlene conversation, May 26, p. 2).*

Every child is expected to bring a Tell and Guess example for the morning circle once each week. This is a time to not only expand their vocabulary, but also to learn to relate more responsibly and humanely to others. During Tell and Guess you insist the children respond to each other in ways which compliment and affirm each other. You have perfected the art of making explicit to children the kind of responsibility towards the other which you expect from them. For instance, each child begins by seeking the undivided attention of their classmates. They do this by gazing around the room to see who is watching and ready to listen and thanking those who are. When it was Marvin's turn to do Tell and Guess he stood poised at the ready with his Tell and Guess book up in front of his chin. His eyes scanned the circle slowly, and he began to acknowledge those whose attention was with him. "Good watching Arnold. Good watching James. Good watching Karne, Kristen, Lorna, everyone else." It was only then that he began to share his Tell and Guess riddle. By that time, all eyes were on him (Field notes, April 14, 1993, p. 1). You have developed this expectation of respect for the voice of all speakers by having the students focus on acknowledging those who are listening and ready to attend to the Tell and Guess task. All students learn about being an audience and what it means to attend respectfully and responsibly to what others are saying. The Tell and Guess "teachers" learn the value in having an attentive audience and how the giving of positive affirming comments encourages others to join the community. It is this mutual responsibility which is so strikingly evident in your classroom

Tell and Guess. This is a classroom expectation you are continually nurturing and this mutual responsibility towards one another requires continuous fine tuning.

> ***Marvin-*** **We do this to see if we are paying attention. It is better than telling someone to watch. . . people will kind of stop what they are doing and watch. . . people are listening.**
> ***Donald-*** **They are watching you. . . sitting still. Looking at the person that is talking (Tell and Guess Interview, April 26, 1993, p. 1).**

You must constantly remind the students of this expectation of mutual responsibility through your public comments to the class. When James was sitting in the cozy corner during Tell and Guess one day, you used his behavior as a way of celebrating responsibility in community. "James I really liked the way that when she (Linda) said good watching, you stayed watching. You kept your eye on her, but most people didn't stay watching. Good job. So I'm going to be watching all the time" (Field notes, May 5, 1993, p. 1).

Yesterday when I found that the noise level wasn't at what I wanted it to be, I would say I like the way you are working Terry. Right away the room gets quiet. Instead of telling Art to work a little quieter. It is the same with the Tell and Guess. I think that they need to be practicing this. Sometimes they do forget because I have to prompt them (Marlene conversation, April 20, p. 5).

Support of a very personal nature was evident when you asked the children to find out about the events surrounding their birth by interviewing their parents. They were to share the results of these interviews with their classmates, and to bring some of their baby belongings to school. Although I had thought children might laugh at each others' baby things, this did not happen. Instead, you invited the children to support each others' sharing by making encouraging comments about their belongings and interviews. Most children felt comfortable with sharing, because they trusted that their classmates would support them as they shared, but several were nervous about it. Cheryl had brought in several bags of things such as her raccoon bear, baby blanket, ceramic slippers, baby mug and many pictures. Donald said "I like how you gave your questions to your mom to answer." Kristen said "I like how you shared your answers to the questions." Melinda commented that she "liked your stuff" (Field notes, May 18, 1993, p. 5b). During Susan's sharing time, she read a poem which her mom had written to her when she was a baby. She shared the list of names her parents had considered calling her, as well as her Smurf and her baby book. Melinda said she liked her pictures; Edward thought it was neat how her mom had made a list of names for her; Arnold liked her baby book; and you commented about her special poem (Field notes, June 7, 1993, p. 6b). These very personal disclosures were brought out in a way which made them acceptable as public knowledge.

> **_Linda_- I had comments before and those were very nice, and I thought they would be just like the other ones, but they were nicer and next time I am going to look forward to it even more.**
> **_Kristen_- I didn't want people to make fun of my baby blanket and teddy bear. I still like my teddy bear. . . but I liked their comments because I know who has been listening and who likes my stuff. People that don't make comments I think that they like my stuff but I am not that sure about it because they didn't answer or anything.**
> **_Lorna_- I feel safe with people sharing their comments because they were nice. . . but it kind of made me**

> **embarrassed because I don't really like sharing my stuff when I was a baby because they might make fun of it.**
> ***Tanya*- The comments make me feel good (Baby sharing interviews, June 7, 1993, p. 4).**
> ***Marvin*- Mostly I think they went well although I am from a different country and most of the English people would have other things than me (Baby sharing interviews, June 7, 1993, p. 5).**

The baby things worked really well. You couldn't do that at the beginning of the year. They wouldn't feel comfortable. They had to know they wouldn't be made fun of. They had to know that that kind of thing wasn't going to happen. That is why they brought those kind of things to share (Marlene conversation, June 16, p.5). It is something that you have to build in all the time. They know that it is not acceptable to laugh at silly answers. You don't laugh if someone makes a mistake when they say something, because if you do, they are not going to risk next time (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 7).

> ***Kristen*- They would probably be in trouble if they spoke out in the cozy corner. They would be embarrassed, because no one else would say it.**
> ***Tanya*- They would be afraid that they would get in trouble.**
> ***Linda*- Our teacher would have been there and she would have said something (Baby sharing interviews, June 7, 1993, p. 3).**

The support for others in your classroom also came up during a health lesson when children were asked to tell what they were good at doing. You requested that they speak in turn, and the conversation went clockwise around the cozy corner circle. Children told of being good at soccer, swimming, playing hockey, math, singing, and a host of other things. When it came to be James's turn, there was a long silence. He could not seem to think of anything he was good at, so you asked the class to think of some things for him. It was amazing how his classmates began to tell him his strengths. Edward told him he was impressed by how James liked working with others and that he was nice. Susan commented how it was neat when he brought his little sister to school, and Arnold said he thought it was great how James had a mom who liked to laugh (Field notes, May 18,1993, p. 3b). There was strong support for him that day, which shows the significance of the responsibility these children feel for each other.

> ***Marvin*- Well we all sit in the circle together and we are like a big huge family and we share our work together instead of keeping our work to ourselves. We just share it out because if we don't share it out we wouldn't be that much of a family because families know what to tell each other (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 3).**
> ***Cheryl* - We share. We sit in the cozy corner and we all can be together in a group, and then we feel good because we are in the caring circle (Student interviews, June 14, p. 13).**

I am always trying to make sure that everyone feels they belong in some way in this classroom. It does not necessarily have to be in the same way but in some special way. That is why we have the support circle. It is like a jigsaw piece by everyone and without that piece it is not complete. With our creed we put people all the way around it because it is everybody in the circle. That is also why I have them sit in a group in a support circle (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 1).

Support is also evident in how you have children work with one another in new learning situations. The way you had Randy teach Marvin about the parent conference was a fine example of how you provide opportunities for children to grow through being responsible for each other. At the same time, the student who receives the needed support learns that others care for them and will support them. Randy took Marvin into his care and explained how conferences worked in your class, since Marvin had been at another school at the time of your last parent conference (Field notes, June 8, 1993, p. 2). These situations show the role which partners can play in coaching others, and how this teaches classroom responsibility. They also show the relationship between the senior members of your community and those who are new and in need of learning how things are done in your class. They suggest the obligation which you expect children to develop towards each other, and some of the ways in which support is nurtured amongst children in your classroom. You are attempting to have them experience how social responsibility for the well-being of the other does not rest solely in the hands of the teacher.

Kids have to feel success before they are going to really challenge themselves. For the conferencing there is no way that you could have Marvin do that on his own. You have to put him with someone that you know can show him what to do. For those that can't you must make sure that you are there to support them (Marlene conversation, June 16B, p. 2).

"Sharing Dark Mountains"

Note to the reader: The supportiveness in Marlene's classroom created an environment in which children were comfortable to take risks to express themselves in a way that they might not have if they felt oppressed by those around them. This community conversation tells the story of risking in action. It is an important story of this classroom because it reveals some of the many ways in which children lived out their sense of comfort as a result of the supportive space which was provided for them. The title "Sharing Dark Mountains" comes from the theme in the Bill Martin Jr. story Knots in a Counting Rope (Martin Jr. & Archambault, 1987) which Marlene used to help children feel brave to share their fears. In this story, a blind boy shows his bravery by overcoming his "dark mountains".

The supportiveness which you encourage amongst your students creates a sense of safety which invites your students to take risks in sharing their thoughts and feelings. They are able to risk in an environment that is reassuring when they are feeling unsure. They experience this in the support circle which you hold regularly in your north-east cozy corner. This support circle comes alive when your students share aspects of their work with the rest of the community and when they are brought together to solve classroom and playground conflicts. You encourage them to be equals in your classroom circle. They have an opportunity to stretch beyond their current knowing within a context which is comfortable with new ideas, encouraging of speculations, and warmly supportive.

This support circle is a public place for private thoughts which comes alive with purpose when members of the community bring up issues to the group. It draws upon, affirms, and celebrates activities of individuals or groups of children but does so only with, and for, the community as a whole. This sharing circle pulses with a sense of purpose through the hearts and minds of its participants.

> ***Linda*- I feel comfortable and safe. . . because if somebody makes mistakes, and you make mistakes, they can't laugh at you. . . because if somebody else made a mistake it is not fair (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 25).**

I have them sit as a group in a support circle. That is why they are so comfortable about doing that. We talk about people being here to support each other and to help them. We come to school so that we can take risks. If you laugh, people aren't going to take risks. You have to encourage them and nurture them so they will want to get up and do that. At the beginning a lot of people don't want to share their writing. Then it gets to the point where they really want to and you don't have enough time for everyone to share (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 2).

> ***Kristen*- Sharing with your class sort of helps, even though it is less people than at assembly it helps. There are like 21 people in our class that help. Twenty-one out of 400 kids in the school. It is not much but it helps because I got used to sharing with someone. So I was sharing in front of people.**
> ***Tanya*- Last year I hardly didn't share. . . at the back like we do in Ms. G.'s or go share in assembly. It has made me brave when I do it, when I shared my writing in assembly (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 4).**

After reading Knots in a Counting Rope (Martin Jr. & Archambault, 1987) you asked your students to speculate about the meaning of the book, and to begin to connect the message of the book to their own lives. You invited them to extend the author's metaphor of "dark mountains" and the notion of personal courage into their own lives by asking them to tell their own "dark mountain" stories. They told of times when they had needed courage to do things in their lives and the fear which these events had brought to their lives. Marvin told of the fear of learning to ride a two-wheeled bike. Mandy said she "was afraid to go in the deep water before." Terry told of how he "was afraid to go in third gear on [his] motorbike, and [he was] worried about moving to the new school." Alan talked about how he struggled "getting used to swimming in [his] clothes." Randy was worried that he "might get a mean teacher" at his new school. Art was "worried about moving and going to a new school." Kristen was "scared to go up in the Calgary Tower." James was afraid when he had to swim in his clothes and "thought [he] was going to drown." Susan was bitten by a dog and is still scared of dogs, and Carl shared his fear of "German Shepherds, Dobermans and big black dogs" (Field notes, May 12, 1993, pp. 1-2).

> ***Susan*- Our classroom is safe because you know you can trust the people by getting to know them more. If I didn't know somebody like Laura . . . I might think she was going to steal something. . . . After I get to know her I find out that she won't steal anything and I can trust her. You just have to find out about different people in a big place.**
> ***Marvin*- I can trust them.**
> ***Laura* - I feel safe because I can trust other people, because I already know some of them.**
> ***Lana* - I feel safe because I can trust them and I know all the people in the classroom and I don't have to worry about anything (Baby sharing, June 7, 1993, p. 5).**

There are lots of neat things to do to build a climate in your classroom. Like I said at the staff meeting yesterday, you are not going to build a climate in 2 weeks, or 3, or 4 weeks. It is ongoing throughout the year. Climate is never where I want it. You don't like to see kids being put down. I do know that kids in *my room can say what they want to say and they know that the people aren't going to make fun of them. I think that school is about taking risks and knowing that it is okay to come here and make mistakes (Marlene conversation, May 13, p. 6). I just say to them that it is not acceptable to put people down. People are not going to want to take risks and to say things if you make comments like that. I just make that very clear that that is not allowed in our classroom (Marlene conversation, May 11, p. 4).*

> ***Tanya-*** **I guess I would say I feel safe, because it is not like you are doing in front of the whole assembly. That's scary, but when you are doing this it feels fun and stuff. You know they won't laugh at you in case you make a mistake.**
> ***Susan-*** **I feel safe when I moved in to the classroom and I did the first play with Kristen and Tanya. I thought people are going to laugh at me or something, but they didn't, so the next time I did a play I hoped they wouldn't laugh at me and they didn't. Then this time I did another play and nobody laughed at me so I know they are not going to laugh at me (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 2).**

Children were taking risks after you asked them to connect this story to their own stories. They felt very free to verbalize their dark mountains, and to bring their personal and private lives into the classroom. Sharing the private is not neglected in your classroom as children collectively share private narrative fragments which seem to bring them closer as a community. As a result, they see others who have issues and fears and they also see that they have commonalities with others. It is through this sharing that they come to see that it is okay to disclose their private thoughts in this public community. The disclosure of their "dark mountains" in situations such as this stems from the trust in, and respect for, each other which you cultivate by insisting they learn to respect each others' comments.

> ***Kristen-*** **If you make a big mistake, people aren't going to tease you about it for the rest of the while you are in school. They won't say. . . remember that time I did the play and everything. So you wouldn't feel safe if you made a mistake, they will tease you. . . . If they did tease you then it would probably be worse.**
> ***Tanya-*** **It's like if you say a word wrong. . . by accident. . . and you didn't go back and fix it, they won't laugh and stuff (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 3).**

I always do sharing too. I don't expect just them to share. I think that lets them see I have dark mountains and then they are more comfortable knowing that it is not just them. Knowing that everybody else has difficulties sometimes makes it easier. Having a safe classroom is about being able to take risks, not being made fun of, and being open about things. All the things that I do to build a positive climate in here show them that people are not going to make fun of them. I don't ridicule kids. I look for the best in them and I don't look for the worst in them. I work very hard to develop that kind of social and emotional atmosphere in this room. I am not going to spend a conference putting a kid down and saying that they don't work hard enough, they leave their work at home all the time, their work is a mess, and that kind of thing. What's the purpose of it? Those positive kinds of things bring it into focus so they will do this. This time of the year they don't even think twice about it (Marlene conversation, May 19, p. 3).

> ***Kristen-*** **We know that they are not going to laugh. If we make a mistake in assembly probably almost the whole school laugh except for our class. It is sort of hard because you don't get used to them laughing. If you make a mistake in assembly it sort of makes me nervous because I am not used**

> **to it. It is harder when people start laughing if you make a mistake. If you can't pronounce a word or whatever. That is why I like having someone up there because if I make a mistake, they can always help me (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 5).**
>
> ***Mandy-*** **If we start crying they won't laugh at us, and they will care for us. . . . They would come help us out instead of just walking away and telling everybody that we are fighting or something (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 5).**

When children shared their thoughts in a debriefing of a health video it showed how you draw them into the circle in a way that allows them to openly discuss personal matters. The discussion revolved around comments about what they would do if they were put in a situation where their friends pressured them to do something they knew was wrong. This was very revealing of how they will share stories in the circle about matters which would not normally be for public consumption. Susan told of her personal struggle to discover right from wrong when she shared how her "friend was pressuring [her] to play with them and not [her] other friend." Cheryl told of the time that her friend "stuck bubble gum in her sleeve" at the convenience store. Linda told of the time she went to the store with her friend Rachael. She "told me that she was going to steal and I told her that I wouldn't be her friend," said Linda (Field notes, May 18, 1993, pp. 4-4b). These personal stories reveal how comfortable your students are made to feel about risking their private thoughts even when these thoughts are troublesome and messy. It shows their trust in this circle as a place where their private disclosures will be supported and accepted by other members of the community.

> ***Cheryl-*** **When you have problems you can talk to people about**

> **them. You can talk to your partners about them. We can tell them anything because they are so nice.**
> ***Tanya-*** **If you tell them a secret and you tell them don't tell anybody, then they'll probably do it because they are like your friends (Math interview, May 14, 1993, p. 3).**

I spend a lot of time talking about it being a safe place. I say things like "We don't laugh when somebody makes a mistake. We don't make fun of them, because if you are made fun of, you are not going to try." You only learn by trying. We all make mistakes and that is why when I make a mistake I point it out to them. My friend Edna says when you are subbing you can really tell what kind of climate there is in a classroom by the way kids laugh when others make mistakes. You know that children are being allowed to do that and that teachers haven't talked about why it is not a good idea to do this (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 6).

> ***Susan-*** **Our classroom isn't like any other classroom. When I changed classes this classroom was nicer to me than my other classroom, because they always teased me. In my other classroom everybody told me that I was smarter than this one boy who wasn't very smart and he was very gross and stuff. They kept saying at least you are smarter than him, and I don't like that. But when I go here nobody says anything about that (Math interview, May 14, 1993, p. 2). . . . It seems like nobody here really gets cranky, but in my old classroom everybody was cranky. It was bad (Math interview, May 14, 1993, p. 4).**

It was interesting when the principal came in to observe me for a full morning. I took a piece of their writing and we did a group lesson at the back and looked at things. This had been about the second or third time they had worked together editing, getting the dictionary and that kind of thing. He was quite impressed with how they were able to work together. Then we came back *and I asked them to share, and nobody wanted to share. It was because he was in the classroom and they didn't feel comfortable. I said to them afterwords, "Why didn't you want to share?" They said they didn't want to share with the principal here. They don't mind sharing when I am around. It was fairly early on in the year so they weren't feeling safe enough to do it (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 4).*

> ***Edward-*** **I don't trust people that don't really know me (Student creed interview, May 6, 1993, p. 15).**

Your classroom is a safe place and provides many opportunities for children to freely choose to read alone or in groups. You create a space which gives everyone a voice and invites them to share their thoughts about books within a community of people who do not laugh at them for their thoughts. You encourage your students to affirm their fellow classmates in these situations. They respond by freely commenting about books you read to them and by asking questions of a speculative, open-ended, and curious nature. When you read Buffalo Woman (Goble, 1984), for instance, children questioned you innocently about the book. One child asked "Were they very kind?", when probing about the way these First Nations people treated Buffalo Woman, despite the fact that it was clear that they were not. There were no giggles or put downs about this comment (Field notes, May 3, 1993, p. 2).

All these little aspects come back to my philosophy. I do each activity to try and build things so the children feel safe, and they each have a voice. I do this so no one is afraid to get up and read their piece. It doesn't matter who *shares, there is always somebody that has something to say. They never leave it so that nobody gets a comment. If there is nobody commenting then someone will comment. They are very sensitive towards that, so people don't feel left out (Marlene conversation, May 26, p. 4).*

> ***Marvin-*** **When I first came to this class my heart pounded, because I was amazed at how people were in here. Some people treated me very nicely. . . even the girls and boys, the bad ones. They treated me by asking me, "are you in hockey?" I said "no." "Do you play soccer?" I said "yeah, yeah". . . . In Tell and Guess they would always save me a spot, and on the first day, I didn't know what Tell and Guess was because I had never done that, so some guys told me "You gotta do this. I will be on today, just listen for me. If you are stuck, just call me." Everybody wanted to help out (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 29).**

Risk-taking has an impact upon the academic activities in your classroom. When you asked for people to review the group work in math which you had just completed, two of the more challenged students, Marvin and Karne were the first to volunteer. I suspect that these two students would be hesitant to speak up in academic situations in most classrooms, yet they do not hesitate to take part in the talk in your classroom (Field notes, May 20, 1993, p. 1).

Karne recognizes his weaknesses but he still risks. He is willing to and likes doing it. I think that is the first step. Otherwise you are not going to get them reading. As they get older it is going to get harder for them (Marlene conversation, June 17, p. 2).

Partner reading and sharing also exemplify what is possible when a climate conducive to risk exists. These activities encourage children to get together and practice performances which develop their courage to share with their classroom community. Carl, Art, Marvin, and Karne's production of the fable about "The Emperor's New Clothes" speaks to the academic risk taking that is possible in your classroom. They busily prepared to share this play with Carl and Art playing the lead roles, and Marvin and Karne performing tailor and messenger parts.

> ***Carl-*** **Because the Emperor and the Empress were the biggest parts Art and I only got one part and then we sorted it out who would be first tailor and who would be second tailor and who would be third tailor.**
> ***Art-*** **Karne picked one, then Marvin picked one. Karne, then Marvin, and so on and so on.**
> ***Marvin-*** **We even cooperated so we could get each part. . . . If I get one part and somebody else wants it they didn't brag that they wanted it, they just took any one else (Emperor's New Clothes interview, April 30, 1993, p. 1)**

Karne read haltingly, but was supported by the three others when he missed words. When it came time to share with the class, Karne was not afraid to take the risks associated with this role (Field notes, April 20, 1993, p. 5). Voluntarily he had taken part in several intense practices to prepare for sharing. When the time came, he engaged confidently in the activity, despite his difficulty with reading. Art crouched behind him, prompting him in an encouraging way (Field notes, April 21, 1993, p. 2b). Karne was not too shy to do this, and no child in the audience went off task, tuned out, or ridiculed him, despite the numerous miscues he made. This story shows how students who are academically challenged will risk and consequently will grow academically, because of their trust in the other members of their community.

> ***Marvin-*** **We actually practiced a lot and then we got the hang of it. We weren't scared or anything and Carl and Art they**

> **taught us. "Don't be shy of these," he told us yesterday when I am up there shaking. . . . Art helped me. . . . I was shaking.**
> ***Art-*** **I could hear it in his voice and I went up to him and I told him to relax. . . . And sometimes if he is reading good and he comes to a hard word then I whisper it to him.**
> ***Karne-*** **I was nervous the first time, when I came in. . . but I didn't got nervous. . . because it was getting fun. . . . He sits beside me, and whispers to me that word. He reads a sentence and then I read it (Emperors New Clothes interview, April 30, 1993, p. 1).**

I don't force them at the beginning, but when we go down to share they gradually get so more and more of them want to share. They don't mind helping each other. Sometimes it is gruelling listening that long, but everyone listens, contributes and tries to help them along. With Karne it goes back to the fact that we encourage people to participate. It doesn't matter if we are as good as somebody else. That is why he does it (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 3).

The fact these four boys voluntarily engaged in the practice and performance of "The Emperor's New Clothes" is significant in both academic and social terms. All the members of each performance group applied themselves to the task in a social way, learning how to help others and how to be more patient when working with others, yet it has equally significant academic benefits for students such as Karne who receive meaningful literacy practice. This is significant because of how timid and unsure Karne is of his reading, because of how Carl is generally not eager to participate with others and is so often getting into trouble in the school yard, because Art usually takes people off task during paired activities and because Marvin is typically shunned from participation by most of the boys in the class.

> ***Carl-*** **We are all friends, plus we (Art and Carl) had done a play together before and Karne and Marvin don't do many plays. . . . Nobody else picks them for anything. . . . They are getting better at plays cuz we are helping them.**
> ***Marvin-*** **This is our first one.**
> ***Art-*** **Marvin is new and Karne is sort of new to this class. I like to help people in the class because after I do it I feel good.**
> **Marvin- And Karne is new to Canada and that is why Art always helps him out (Emperors New Clothes interview, April 30, 1993, p. 2).**

These boys were involved and not off task during any of the practices associated with this production. Art and Carl served as leaders in this situation, helping Marvin and Karne, who were in need of direction and support. Continual group discussion about possible reformulation of lines and actions kept them focused, and they were never in need of intervention by you.

> ***Carl-*** **It sounds better when you change some lines.**
> ***Art-*** **This is the life, we put "aaah!!!" . . . I think it sounds much better like "Aaah this is the life!!!"**

They were in an environment in which they were allowed the space to construct their own curriculum. They felt safe to engage in actions of their choosing, but these actions occurred within a social context and were driven by the knowledge that their performance would be upcoming. Your conscious efforts to model a celebratory, supportive, and safe circle context, together with continual examples by other classmates, created a performance environment expectation which was receptive to their efforts.

They really feel that they can take risks and no one is going to make fun of them. Someone is always going to help them. It is trying at times. Art said "Ms. G. this is pretty long." They knew that it was getting pretty long and thought *maybe they should finish it next time (Marlene conversation, April 22, p. 2).*

You have to have safety and trust before you can have risk. You have to feel safe in here. They have to feel they can trust not only me but the other kids in the classroom. You have to keep working on activities that are going to show them that it is okay to risk. I tell them it is safe in here and they can take risks. They know it is safe in here so they will share (Marlene conversation, June 16B, p. 1).

> ***Laura* - You can have a friendship in there and if you know they are your friends you can trust them (Baby sharing interviews, June 7, 1993, p. 5).**

Some of them have probably had experiences that are not safe. This is one of the things I work on right at the beginning (Marlene conversation, June 16B, p. 1). I think they are comfortable to speak out because of the shared reading that we do and the Tell and Guess that we do. It is all the kinds of things that they get up in front of the class and talk about. I think they build on each other. It is not just one aspect (Marlene conversation, May 19, p. 3).

> ***Tanya*- Sometimes I might think they might not listen and they might not clap that much or anything or give us any comments. But nope that never happened (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 2).**

"Bringing All Children into the Circle"

Note to the reader: This community conversation is a story about the belief which Marlene holds that all children be included in her community. It explores her personal practical knowledge and shows her classroom to be a place in which all children have a voice and are accepted for who they are. It reveals examples of how they embody this conviction through the types of actions in which they engage in the classroom. The story was named after Marlene's metaphor in which she stated that she wanted the children to be brought from the outer into the inner circle of the classroom.

The inclusion of all children in your classroom is an important part of your community. Being a member of your classroom means children have both a right to, and responsibility for, input into the learning and actions which take place there. This aspect of your classroom is evident in your continual effort to encourage a sense of belonging by emphasizing these rights and responsibilities of "community-ness." Some of these rights are to have one's culture heard, to be valued for one's knowledge contribution, to be allowed to remain in the classroom, and to speak out in protest to those who may cause one harm. Teaching your students the responsibilities which accompany these rights of inclusion is a major task which occupies your teaching.

> ***Mandy-*** **Ms. G. helps us do things that say that we promise to be nice and respect other people's things. She puts us in groups and we have to be nice. Like Marvin is not really being nice to Arnold. . . . Whoever says something rude to you has to say something nice to you right back (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 5).**

Some are still on the outside and I am always trying to bring them in. I am asking myself what kinds of things can I do to do that (Marlene conversation, May 13, p. 9).

> ***Mandy-*** **If anybody is lonely I ask if they want to play with me.**

> **If anybody is crying I ask them what is the matter and everything, and I help them. Linda, she always gets frustrated with her math and she starts crying and I calm her down and everything, because she doesn't know the answer. . . . I tell her that she is really good at her math and that if she needs help she can ask Kristen because she sits right beside her, because I don't know grade four math (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 3).**

After I had read Byron Through the Seasons (Children of LaLoche and Friends, 1990), a book published by a Dene school in northern Saskatchewan, to the children, I re-read part of the book in Dene. You told the children that by learning some of the Dene language when I taught in the far north, I was demonstrating respect and understanding for these peoples' traditions. You used this as a way to discuss their right to have their cultural traditions included in the classroom.

> Marlene- "Edward attends Chinese classes every Saturday at the university. Could you bring some of your work to share with us?"
> Marlene- "What language do you speak at home Randy?"
> Randy- "Punjabi"
> Marlene- "And you Karne?"
> Karne- "Hindi" (Field notes, April 20, 1993, p. 6b)

Following this, you asked children to bring stories of their home culture to share with others. You asked them to share their special traditions and to celebrate the diverse languages they or their parents spoke. Your public encouragement to children to share their home language and traditions with the class is an invitation to them to include their culture as part of this community.

> ***Edward-*** **We learn how to work together and learn about each other and we share stuff. . . . People bring stuff from their house and we know stuff from their past or something (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 4).**

At the beginning of the year they wouldn't share their culture. In January, *Edward didn't even want to tell us how to say happy New Year in Chinese. It was neat how those things came right out of the woodwork that day (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 10).*

There is an inclination amongst your students to conform to mainstream culture and to deny the existence of their own cultures, but you invite them to affirm their home culture through classroom activities. Randy, for instance, uses an Anglo name in school, although his father prefers to have him go by his Sikh name. You support his identity in both cultural worlds by giving him the right to be called Randy in conversation, but you insist he be responsible for writing his official name on his work (Field notes, April 26, p. 7). When he chose to share aspects of his language by bringing the Punjabi alphabet to class and showing the Sikh national anthem, this showed that he felt comfortable with the way you had been encouraging him to bring his home culture into the classroom.

Marvin also chose to discuss his thoughts about his home culture after you encouraged him to bring some things from home. He brought a letter, photograph and money from Bangladesh and shared them with the class. He felt comfortable telling his classmates that people were very poor in Bangladesh and that his parents occasionally send $100 in Canadian dollars to extended family at home. "It is like a $1000 to them" (Field notes, April 28, 1993, p. 5).

> ***Susan*- I think the classroom is a community because we have all different types of people. Some people like maybe Edward is Chinese, and Randy is East Indian, and then there is others.**
> ***Sasha* - I am half Indian, and half white man, and half black man (Student interviews, June 14, p. 7).**

You invite children who normally remain "outside the circle" to join it by looking for opportunities to praise their behavior. Sometimes you approach Sasha, a girl with many needs, and tell her you are pleased with her behavior (Field notes, April 23, 1993, p. 2). This tells her you believe in her and that she has the right to feel welcome if she chooses to enter into the classroom activities. It tells her also that there are responsible ways of acting in your classroom.

I point out things that individuals are doing in the classroom which is another way of having them show that they are teachers. Bringing out positive aspects of what is happening in the classroom instead of focusing on the negative shows them that they get attention for that and not for the other things (Marlene conversation, May 26, p. 2).

You also ask all children to give you answers in math, rather than relying upon those who are quick to respond to your questions (Field notes, May 11, 1993, p. 1b). When you were introducing geometry to the threes you had them sitting in the cozy corner. (The fours were at their tables doing math seat work). There were 12 year threes in a circle with you as you showed them various shapes. No one was left out, yet no one was put in a situation where they were coerced into participating. If they did not know the shapes, they were still asked to guess, because participation is a responsibility of being in your classroom. Yet responsibility is stressed in such a way that it appears as a right because all the children were sufficiently comfortable to participate (May 14,1993, p. 1b).

I want them to belong and to be accepted. The principal and I have *talked about the adaptation/special education kids and he thinks they get turned off in five and six. I don't see that these ones would be turned off in five and six. I think it is the way you treat them in the classroom. They are excited about reading this year and they don't mind doing their math. They think that they are good at it (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 4).*

Your belief in the right of all your students to be included in community functions was most powerfully expressed by your story of being a special education teacher. You shared your story of the boy you taught in special education who had spent most of the previous year standing in the hallway because his behavior was inappropriate. You talked about how this bothered you when you found out, because you knew that it meant he hadn't learned anything. This story fits with your belief in the right of everyone to be included in your classroom. I did not see you put children out of your room in all the time I was there, so this made sense (Field notes, May 27, 1993, p. 2). It is part of your belief that you have a responsibility to be a "teacher of all kids." This came out clearly in our discussion about teachers who try to avoid taking behavior problem children into their classes (Field notes, June 4, 1993, p. 6).

> ***Cheryl-*** **We share. We stick up for them and you introduce yourself to them when they are new and make new friends. . . . Mandy was at her desk and she didn't know anybody and no one was talking to her, so I went up and I introduced myself to her (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 14).**

I don't agree with kids being out of their classroom. They don't learn anything. Very rarely will I send them some place. I have one rule. If I catch them swearing they aren't welcome in my classroom. They will be asked to *spend the day in the office because they need to know the appropriate time to swear. Last year one of my boys got into a fight, and he was swearing and I caught him. He had to miss the next day which happened to be a field trip. That probably hurt me more than it hurt him, but I can't go back on my word. I have told them that, and they know what is going to happen (Marlene conversation, April 8, p. 3).*

I work really hard so that I don't segregate kids from the group. I don't have a time out room because I don't believe in leaving kids out of the room. If I send them from the cozy corner it is for a very brief time. It is a very strong belief of mine that kids don't learn outside your door. They don't learn in the office, they don't learn sitting outside the door. Pushing them outside the door is excluding them, not only through my eyes but through everybody's eyes in this classroom. I can have kids that are showing inappropriate behavior get up and move. When they say "I am not working beside you because I can't get any work done," it is more powerful than me moving them, because they want to be part of the group. I think that is the key thing and having had half of them at the beginning of the year makes it so much easier because they know your expectations and they model it (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 2).

> ***Marvin-*** **If you hadn't someone to work with, it wouldn't be that much fun because it is not that much fun working alone. . . . You get lonely there sitting and looking at everybody working together and everything (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 3).**

You have done a great deal to make sure that the "special needs" children who are placed in your class feel they are not singled out as different from their classmates. You do this by de-emphasizing their labels and encouraging them to see their rights and responsibilities for joining the community (Field notes, June 7, 1993, p. 3). Karne is one of many children who has chosen to join your community by fully participating in classroom activities. Despite his difficulties with the English language which stem from his recent arrival in Canada, he chose the word "composition" for Tell and Guess and none of the other children were able to guess it. This shows how he has chosen to be responsible for challenging his classmates, just as they are responsible for designing activities which challenge him (Field notes, May 25, 1993, p. 1).

I think Tell and Guess gives them the confidence. Last year James's mom had to do his Tell and Guess for him all the time. He had difficulty reading it. He comes up with most of his clues by himself now (Marlene conversation, April 15, p. 3).

Another example of how you include children in the circle relates to the way you express to children their right to be cared for by their classmates and the responsibility they have for caring for one another. When Mandy found herself on the outside of her relationship with Linda, Cheryl and Sasha, she tearfully shared with you her predicament of not having anyone to play with at recess. You made her dilemma a community responsibility by opening it up for discussion with the class. You did not insist that Sasha and Cheryl play with her, but you asked the community as a whole to consider who could play with her and Melinda quickly volunteered (Field notes, June 8, p. 1). Some issues may not typically appear to be of a public, communal responsibility, but in your classroom, you are continually moving in and out of the personal/private and public areas. By bringing Mandy's personal dilemma into the public domain in this instance, you addressed your goal of having children learn to be responsible for caring for each other.

> ***Kristen*- Ms.G. says if someone asks us if they could play with us then we have to say yes. . . so no one is left out and they don't feel bad. Because one time Cheryl, Mandy, and Sasha had a fight. Two of them would play together and the other one wouldn't have anyone to play with so we'll ask them (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 19).**

It is my job to figure out the best way I can so they are included in the community. It is like the inner and outer circle. I am trying to get them all on the inside and none on the outside (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 2).

Another example of rights and responsibility in community surfaced when Art and Edward were calling Lorna a pig. Instead of taking the matter totally into your own hands you helped Lorna initiate the discussion of the injustice by being there as a support for her when she spoke to the boys. You called the two boys over and told them that Lorna had something to say to them.

> *Lorna*- "I don't like it when you call me pig."
> *Art*- "But it means pretty intelligent Geek."
> *Marlene*- "But that is not a nice thing to say. It makes her feel bad. What do you have to say for yourselves?" (Field notes, May 3, 1993, p. 2b).

Lorna had the right to be included in your classroom by not being called names, but this right came with the responsibility of finding and using her own voice in protest of the way she was treated. You did not expect her to do this alone. Your responsibility was to provide a strong back-up for her.

I do a lot of supporting at the beginning for them. Instead of me saying, "Edward and Art, Lorna doesn't like that," I want her to express the fact that she doesn't like that. I want her to tell them how it makes her feel and have her tell them that she wants them to stop. They don't always stop but at least she is expressing her own point of view (Marlene conversation, May 11, p. 5).

Your desire to have all children included in your classroom community is one of the most important beliefs that drives your practice. There are many instances where you do things in your classroom so children will feel part of the circle. You help them see their right to bring their lives into the classroom and to experience the classroom as a place where they have individual as well as communal responsibilities.

"Giving Children Voice"

Note to the reader: Community conversations about "Giving Children Voice" reveal another way that Marlene strives to include all children in her classroom community. By giving children a voice in classroom affairs, Marlene and her students publicly embrace conflicts which could threaten group harmony, and use them as opportunities to develop feelings of collective responsibility for relational problems. I named this story "Giving Children Voice" after Marlene's reference to this in our conversations. When Marlene insisted her students have a voice in solving problems and conflicts through classroom support circles it conjured up an image of strong democracy for me.

Common talk occurs regularly in your classroom and is part of your commitment to empowering your students to have a say in solving some of the persistent social interaction conflicts which occur amongst them. Common talk describes the open discussion which your students engage in about issues which matter in their relationships with others. Your purpose is to have students recognize the issues of common concern which affect the smooth functioning of the group as a collection of individuals. You wish them to collectively recognize the complexity of issues, to offer workable solutions which reflect the common good of your community, and to have them see the issue as one they, rather than you, need to solve. Common talk shows the talk which you engage your students in as they struggle towards becoming a community of otherness.

I give them voice in here. They know that what they say is going to be listened to and respected. They can freely speak what they want to speak and they don't need to be afraid of what I am going to say. They can disagree with things that I may be wanting to do and they can talk about things that they would like to do. They can talk about things that have happened to them now and in the past. They see that they have some direction in their education. It is not just all me. I want my kids to be able to voice things. I don't want it all coming from within me. I feel that this is a partnership we have in here. It is not just me that is doing it (Marlene conversation, May 19, p. 4).

When there is personal conflict in your classroom you make a point of bringing this conflict into the public arena for discussion by your students.

Therefore, when controversy arises over the breaking of school rules or perceived wrong doing to individuals in your classroom, you invite your students to join you in a sharing circle in the cozy corner for collective dialogue. The cozy corner has become a place where all children are equally free to talk; although without your guidance and input, this would not be so. This cozy corner time is an opportunity for you to collaboratively discuss the implications and possible resolutions to these issues with your students.

> ***Lana* - If someone gets in trouble I hear what Ms. G. says. Then they start talking to her and they keep on talking until the problem is solved. It is good that they get over the discussion while we are down here (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 8).**

Every time we come back into our support circle I have them sit in a circle. I am trying to get them to have voice. I am trying to have them all feel secure so that they can risk and say what they want to say. No one laughs at them. We talked at the beginning about how the circle is supposed to be a very safe place for us to be. Everyone should be able to feel that they can say what they want to (Marlene conversation, May 11, p. 3). If you allow rude comments about people's work in your classroom then it is going to happen, but if it is not acceptable people are going to want to take risks and to say things. I really want them to understand and be able to feel that they can express an opinion that is far off and to take that risk (Marlene conversation, May 11, p. 4).

> ***Cheryl* - We sit in the cozy corner and we all can be together in a group, and then we feel good because we are in the caring circle (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 13).**

When Ms. Corcoran informed you that students from your classroom were involved in snowball throwing you invited them to join you in the cozy corner for discussion. You asked them to share their accounts of this event but you did not accuse individuals of wrong-doing.

> *Marlene*- "I had Ms. Corcoran come to me this recess. Why do you think she came to me?"
> "Snowballs, kicking snow" replied the students, without hesitation.
> *Marlene*-"Yes, exactly. Do we need to have this discussion again?" you queried. "I want to talk to you about making a plan."

When several children began to volunteer specific details which incriminated their classmates, you re-directed their comments.

> *Marlene*- "I am not asking you to tell me who did it. I said to her that I would talk to you."

You gazed around the room and asked each child quietly if they had this issue sorted out. They all agreed they had. You then proceeded to ask them to share a range of possible solutions.

> *Marlene*-"Tell me some things you can do."
> "We could make forts. Make snow angels. Make baby snow men," the students responded (Field notes, April 6, 1993, p. 2).

> ***Edward*- If somebody was throwing snowballs outside, we usually would talk about not throwing snowballs so that everybody can hear. She just asks you to stop. She doesn't order you around that much. She just asks you to stop it and the next time you will have to lose your recess. The cozy corner. . . is where we usually meet, and where we talk about stuff and where we listen. . . . It is like a little bedroom kind of thing, but it doesn't have a bed. . . . It is just like a family meeting. . . . We are sharing ideas and we help each other and we do most of our talking there and we go there every day (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 17).**

I knew who they were and they knew I knew. They knew exactly who I was talking about. They knew that Ms. Corcoran had probably mentioned it to *me. There were probably six or seven of them that were having problems. If it is just one like Art yesterday, then I would take him and I would deal with that separately because I feel that the rest of them don't need to hear when it's not really affecting them (Marlene conversation, April 8, p. 3). I don't like listening to people telling on each other. I've told them outside at recess that I want them to try to solve problems themselves unless it is a matter of life and death. If it is really serious then I am prepared to get involved, but if it isn't, then it is up to them to get it solved, with whoever they are arguing with. If it is a constant thing then I will help them solve it (Marlene conversation, April 20, p. 4).*

Not singling out specific individuals is in keeping with your view of the classroom as a community of individuals who have responsibilities to one another. This responsibility emerged from their talk together. It was important to you for them to come up with their own naming of the problem and cast it in a way which would lead to a community resolution. You also indicated, "when we come in at lunch I'm going to ask you what you were able to do at noon."

> ***Kristen*- Sometimes people make fun of us. If we tell Ms. G. she will talk to. . . the whole class and. . . then we probably won't do it anymore. She talks in the beginning of the year, and at the end you might have forgotten (Student Interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 14).**

Sometimes I just talk in general, but other times I want them to be specific. I want them to be accountable for what they have done. Sometimes I want to know who it was, and I want them to tell me and not other people. It is harder for them to do that than to have someone tattle on them. Then they are more accountable for their actions. I say to them, "It is easy to make mistakes, *but it is harder to admit that you made them. It is easy to talk about things, but when you have to apologize for your behavior, that is the hard part." I always say to them "You need to think about what you do before you do it. If you are not prepared to talk about it, or to apologize for it, then you shouldn't be doing it" (Marlene conversation, April 20, p. 3).*

Another example of this common talk occurred when you discovered many of the boys and girls in your class had been involved in rough play on the playground at recess. You began this discussion by getting them to volunteer information informing you of their actions. "Any ideas about what our discussion needs to be about?"

> *Randy-* "Playing too rough."
> *Art-* "We were playing too rough."
> You then asked for "ideas of why these things are happening?"
> *Tanya-* "The boys catch the girls."
> *Edward-* "It is more like the girls catch the boys" (Field notes, April 27, 1993, p. 3b).

You allowed them to share their feelings but you insisted they remain focused upon a solution. "I just want to hear how you as children in this classroom can stop this," you asked. They admitted they were playing too rough, and were able to suggest ways things could be improved with alternative activities."

> *Susan-* "Instead of playing all together you can go off and play with somebody else."
> *Edward-* "Don't play it anymore."

> ***Shawn-* When we play rough games somebody would come in and tell Ms. G. and when recess was done she would talk to the whole class and then they wouldn't do it again (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 14).**

They have to realize that the things they do are hurting people. They have to be more aware of how they feel when that is happening to them. When things affect the whole group and the cohesiveness of the group then I discuss it as a group because it is affecting all of us. I want them to try to work on solving playground kinds of issues themselves (Marlene conversation, June 17, p. 2).

This example of common talk moved from the issue to the solution with considerable student input, and reflected your belief in how children should act on the playground. When you asked them to demonstrate the type of play they had been engaged in and they began to show you how the actual rough play had happened, you made sure they were aware of your disapproval. "Is it okay to do it to Linda and not to me? . . . Am I a person? . . . Is she a person? . . . It is no different whether I am older and she is younger, that is no different. . . . So I want that game to stop." You proceeded to get them to suggest consequences for their actions if they continued, and they came up with the idea of losing their recess (Verbatim transcript, April 27, 1993, pp. 1-2).

I spend a lot of time talking things out but I feel it is beneficial. The kinds of things that we talk about give two points of view. I want them all to express an opinion. That is why I go around. There are kids that will cop out. One of my jobs this year is the leader for the year three-four team. I have to organize the meetings and I don't give the opportunity for teachers to cop out. I make sure that everyone says something and has a voice, and I know there are some that would prefer not to. Depending on how the group works will depend on the success of this. I do the same as I do with my kids in the cozy corner. I go *around and say "What do you think? What is your opinion? Do you want to share? Would you share now?" I made sure that everyone was included. At least that shows that they are listening. I think those discussions are really important to have. I call them a little class meeting. We talk about problems. Instead of me lecturing the whole time I like them to bring out issues too (Marlene conversation, May 5, p. 6).*

> ***Kristen-*** **We are supposed to be in a circle and we work out problems there like if someone is throwing snowballs, and that game we were playing. Sometimes we will talk about stuff like that down there. She will remind us not to do things like that because some people throw snowballs and you forget about it. You have to listen, especially when people start doing bad things. . . . You don't really have to listen to it, but I do anyway. She asks them. She doesn't say you have to do something. She just asks us what we can do about it (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 20).**

It is clear that conflict is always possible in classrooms. Despite our best efforts to try to create a climate of peace and harmony in our classroom we must live with the knowledge that harmonious relations can become personal conflicts. You are ready to embrace these conflicts and use them as learning experiences for the children in your classroom. When these issues came up you made a point of involving the children in solutions, but you did so within the boundaries of what you see as acceptable classroom deportment. This acceptable form of classroom behavior revolves around your notion of the classroom as a place where children should treat each other with dignity and respect and where issues of individual rights to behavior must be understood in light of the common good of all students.

> ***Edward-* We have family talks about throwing snowballs. . . and fighting.**
> ***Terry-* And about making fun of people (Student interviews, June 14, p. 1).**

No relationship lacks conflict. They all have it, and you are going to have to learn to deal with that. It is not a smooth ride. You have to work hard to build relationships, and each little thing that happens maybe makes it a little bit easier for you the next time (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 6).

You also engage in common talk in your cozy corner about ways to create more of a community of otherness (Freidman, 1983) with their fellow students. After reviewing my field notes, which illuminate examples of childrens' efforts to include others, you brought their private efforts up for public discussion. When Marvin was absent one day you talked about his tentative place in your classroom community and encouraged and praised those children who were helping him to become more a part of their community. You then went on to talk about how this was an important and valuable part of this community.

> Lots of you have said that you help (each other) if something happens, and I have been watching to see. I have really been appreciating the way Arnold has been trying to make a special effort to make Marvin feel welcome in our classroom, and I know that Kristen and Linda have been really working to make Susan feel welcome too. It is hard to move into a classroom in the middle of the year. It is just the same if you moved to a new neighborhood and you had to go to a new school. It is really difficult. I think you really need to look hard at how you can make that person feel special and welcome in our room and I really appreciate those of you who have been doing that. That's great. And the ones that haven't maybe you could look at how you could do it. You know I have talked with Mr. Orr about how we have looked at tolerance and understanding and acceptance. You don't ever get to acceptance until you have the understanding first of all. You don't understand people until you get to know them and you have to work with them. Maybe there are some

> things they don't like about you too, but you have to learn to accept those kinds of things, and learn to get along with everyone. So I really want to thank you people for doing that, and for making a special effort in doing that. I know that you have been helping him (Marvin) a bit with his math too (Field verbatim, April 23, 1993).

This conversation is typical of the way you insist your students consider, care, and feel for each other. It speaks to your desire to include them in the building of their community through common talk and common action. These individual acts are part of a larger commitment to the common good of all classroom members, which you see as a central part of your job as a classroom teacher.

I look at it as a family. When we are at school we are a family. Whatever affects you affects me too. It is not just you by yourself. I look at it as a family of learners. When you are in your family you are going to have problems and you are going to have to discuss them. We have to learn to get along the best we can to meet each individuals' needs because they are not all the same. I tell them that we are a great big family and that is why I pull them together as a group and talk to them (Marlene conversation, April 8, p. 3).

"Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community"

Note to the reader: This community conversation shows the social interaction which students experience in partner reading. I share this theme to illustrate how Marlene uses partner reading to help children develop their ability to be socially responsible to others and how children respond to this activity. I named this story "Partner reading and the

Sociality of Community" after Marlene's emphasis upon sociality in our talks about partner reading. This classroom activity was very popular with the students and stood out for me as highly conducive to the development of social responsibility.

Terry balanced carefully on Edward's back as he rode back and forth in the open space in front of the big cozy corner. Terry, Edward, Randy and Shawn reworked a fable into a play. Mandy stirred an imaginary pot made from an ice cream bucket filled with bingo markers. Carl sat in the cozy corner rocking in the chair, unconnected to anything around him. Marvin and Karne huddled behind three chairs placed in a row beside a set of student tables. Art determinedly measured the air with a tape measure. Marvin, Karne, Carl, and Arnold, were preparing to perform The Three Billy Goats Gruff (Galdone, 1973), complete with a chair bridge. Cheryl busily cut green paper into thin strips and let them fall haphazardly onto a mound of pillows. She then picked them up and began attaching them to the cow coat hangar to simulate a tree. Sasha was beginning to practice the play about a pig which she and Cheryl would perform together. She gathered all of the plump pillows she could find for her play partners to sit on. Donald lay quietly under three chairs as Art jumped up and down in mock fury above him. This was an essential scene for The Three Billy Goats Gruff, which they were rehearsing. Linda, Melinda, and Laura read and re-read a book in the corner, without any props. Tanya, Susan, Lana and Kristen were doing their practicing of a play about tiger's whiskers by the classroom doorway. They made whiskers out of black construction paper, a bed out of chairs, and carried their whiskers in one of the classroom baskets (Field notes, June 17, 1993, p. 1-1b).

Just moments before, you had told them they could do partner reading in preparation for sharing. This means they get to perform a play for their classmates. They had 15 minutes to ready themselves and all but Carl were deeply engaged in the task. You had done nothing out of the ordinary to urge them. Nonetheless, they sprang immediately to action once they knew what they would be doing. They did this because *they* see plays as an exciting and socially important part of their classroom activity. This partner reading and sharing process involves intense interaction in which roles, parts, props, scenes and story lines are negotiated in a context which is child-centered yet it is a collective endeavor which draws upon activities that are inherently social. This all occurs despite the fact that you often sit quietly at your desk during partner reading, carefully but unobtrusively watching what goes on.

> ***Tanya***- **I guess it is like you are doing a performance when you share. It is sort of like you did a play on stage. It is just the same like that and that is fun too (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 1).**

I will ask them "Who is going to do what part? What stories are you going to do?" My bottom line is that no one is to be left out. Quite often the students that go to resource come back a little bit later and they feel on the outside. If they see that someone is hanging back, I say to them that they have to make sure that they are included. I don't want them to say "No you can't join us".

Sometimes kids choose not to go with somebody and that is okay if that is their choice, but if they want to work with someone then they have to be able to find a spot. They shouldn't have to go and ask five or six groups if they can join them. I think it is hard enough for them to say can I join you without being turned down (Marlene conversation, April 29, p. 4).

> ***Tanya*- We gave Susan lots of support when she came into our class. We asked if she would want to play with us. . . .**
> ***Kristen*- The first day that we did a play when she was here we picked her. I knew her from before because my old friend used to play with her. So we partnered up with her and she was a really neat friend and now we like her as a friend because she is neat (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 6).**

At the beginning, I do a lot of ground work on it. I talk about it and how I don't want it to happen. I will say to them at the beginning. "If there is anybody that doesn't have a partner, come and see me. Then I will say, "So and so doesn't have a partner, what group can they go to?" Then I talk about how they would feel if it was them that didn't have a partner. I say, "How would you feel if you came up and asked someone to work with them and they said no we don't want you in our group?" I do a lot of that kind of talking. I talk about the leadership kinds of things and how you can't always have your own way and you sometimes have to let other people have their way too. It is hard for them. If I see people being left alone at the beginning then I will just talk with that group about that (Marlene conversation, April 29, p. 5).

> ***Kristen*- Well I read a story about a witch in quiet reading and then I wanted to partner up with Lorna and I thought that using trolls would be neat. But then we needed a witch and maybe someone else to also be in it. So we picked Lana**

> **because she had trolls we could use and then we picked Melinda and Laura, but they had their own play so we used Linda. . . . Me and Lorna wanted to be the people who were eating because it was sort of like our idea. . . . Lana and Linda were the witches and. . . Melinda and Laura were the people who were eating. When they heard us read our menu out loud they ran off. So we had two witches and two customers and that was sort of hard with only two witches (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 1).**

One day Sasha's desire to get her own way at the expense of others met with the social powers of community. She tried to control the agenda of her group-mates for her own self-interests when she was working with Tanya and Susan to perform The Ghost-Eye Tree (Martin Jr. & Archambault, 1985). She decided it was not to her liking when they would not agree to all her prop ideas, so she left to try to join Melinda, Laura and Lana as Papa Bear of "The Bernstein Bears". Susan and Tanya carried on without her. When she found out she was too late to join them because they were already well into the play, she sat pouting and commented that she thought partner reading was boring. Melinda, Lana and Laura carried on as before by pretending Papa Bear was still at work. After some time, Sasha returned to the original play with Susan and Tanya (Field notes, June 1, pp. 1-1b).

If there is conflict I say you need to work that out at your group. You have to keep working on that and working on that, and working on that. Also some of the kids that have been in my room for two years know this and they are part of that role model idea at the beginning of the year. They are able to help problem solve. That gives me time so I can watch and observe what the groups are doing. Sometimes I will just go and listen to one group read and keep an eye *on what is happening (Marlene conversation, April 29, p. 6).*

Your students learn many things from partner reading. They learn to build consensus about who does what in the play, and about the type of props and scenes they will use. You insist on one simple rule which seems to guide them. Each individual must receive an appropriate part in the performance. You tell them, "No part is a small part. Every part is important" (Field notes, April 26, 1993, p. 6). There is little time to argue because the children have learned that if they spend their time arguing they will not have sufficient time to practice and still be ready to perform during sharing. They want to share their play and realize their obligation to practice collaboratively before they can perform. They know also that their peers are craving performances which are interesting and so they are conscious of the need to use expression in their voices and creativity in their sets. They know they cannot expect to perform every time sharing happens since everyone needs to have a chance to perform. You know who is ready to perform and who needs more time to rehearse.

> ***Kristen*- Depending on if we are ready or not . . . sometimes I get sort of nervous. When we only practice it like twice and it is a long one (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 2).**

This teaches them to be able to work with different people and to realize that in life they are not always going to get their own way. You are going to have to give in. There are some people that see just black and white and they never see any of the grey areas. I think it is important that you do. I always say it depends on whose window you are looking through. You may not agree with them, but sometimes you have to look through that person's window. You need *to be able to understand their point of view, even though you might not do that yourself. As a teacher there are things that happen on staff that don't agree with my own philosophy, but if it works for that teacher, then I have to respect their right. I think with the kids, they have to learn to respect that as well (Marlene conversation, April 29, p. 5).*

> ***Kristen*- Some people help if I have problems. . . . They help me and then you get used to asking those people to help you. Sometimes Ms. G. is busy so you have to go like to a grade three or a grade four (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 5).**

When Lorna, Linda, Donald, Kristen, and Mandy began preparing a play about Goldilocks and the Three Bears, many aspects of their support for one another and of the way they engage in these activities came out. As they proceeded there was lots of jostling around to get props in order and there was considerable negotiation of what to do for various scenes. The "Three Bears" group decided amongst themselves who would play each part and the props they would use for each scene.

> ***Kristen*- When we did the three bears I sort of didn't want to use my baby voice and I didn't want to crawl on my knees or anything, but I did. . . because they needed me to because I was the baby bear. . . . Somebody might laugh and I didn't really want them to, but they didn't (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 2).**

I let them negotiate within the group what they are going to do. I don't ever get involved in that (Marlene conversation, April 29, p. 4). As far as who is going to do what, I figure they need to work that out themselves. That is part of being responsible, getting along and negotiating. One time you may be the *reader, but then they might say, "You read last time. I'm going to read this time" (Marlene conversation, April 29. p. 5).*

They then began to practice acting it out.

> "Okay Lorna is Papa Bear, Linda is Mama Bear and I am Baby Bear. And Mandy is Goldilocks and Donald is the narrator," said Kristen.
> "Once upon a time," began Donald. "Let's get rid of the chairs," he added.

As they switched from the scene inside the three bears house to one outside of the house, the three bears switched from their actor role, to the bicycle scene. Kristen pulled up three chairs in a row and the three bears sat down and began pedalling.

> "Outside Papa Bear jumped onto the bicycle," said Donald.
> "Wait for me," squeeked Kristen, now in her Baby Bear role.
> Goldilocks entered after some excited pleading from Donald.
> "Goldilocks get in here," he shouted.

Mandy, in Goldilocks character, stepped inside the imaginary house and began to act out the parts, as Donald called them out. She tested the three bowls of porridge, sat in the three chairs, and laid down on the three beds. The three bears, now in prop-devising role, found some different sized containers from the math manipulatives, placed pillows of various degrees of hardness on the three chairs where Goldilocks was to sit, and quickly crafted the three beds where Goldilocks was to sleep. Donald, in narrator role, continued to call out orders if Goldilocks forgot her actions. Some of the bear characters were off in the corner practicing another part of the play. After a bit of confusion over what was to be done next, Donald called Mama Bear back to the scene. "Mama Bear! Excuse me, Mama Bear! We need you over here," said Donald.

When all the characters returned to a central meeting place, they began to negotiate changes to the play.

> "Why don't we just do the story off by heart?" Lorna says.
> "Okay I'll cue you guys. Okay?" said Donald. "Everybody line up right now."

They began by introducing the play as if they were presenting it to the whole class.

> "Me, Kristen, Linda, Lorna and Mandy have been practicing The Three Bears", said Donald. "Um. Mandy is Goldilocks,. . . . Once upon a time there were three bears who lived in a cottage in the woods. . ."
>
> When it came to the acting out parts, the bears sprang into action.
>
> "Too hot ! Too hot!" Growled Papa Bear.
> "Oh my mouth burned!" squeeked Baby Bear.
> " Oh I am so sorry," said Mama Bear. "Let's go outside for a while and let it cool off."

They repeated the bicycle scene, and carried on with the other parts of the play with Donald reading the lines and the actors carrying out their respective parts, and voicing their lines from memory. Before the play had been fully rehearsed, time ran out and it became sharing time. They would return to their rehearsal the next day (Field verbatim, April 23, 1993; Field notes, April 23, 1993, p. 2-2b).

There is an unwritten standard of performance which is set by the members of your classroom community. They can expect positive comments such as the things which their classmates liked about the performance, will be publicly voiced upon completion of their play. This motivates children to become aware of the community as audience, and ask themselves: How interesting will this play be for those who hear it? How 'fun' will it be to share for them? What will the audience say to us which supports our efforts? There is also an unwritten expectation which seems to say there will be no put downs of others. You personally favor positive, supportive comments which affirm student performances.

> ***Kristen*- Ms. G. always told us not to laugh and everything. People make mistakes and sometimes you forget but it is not often. If we make a mistake then we know that they are not going to laugh, unless you forget, which isn't very often (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 2).**

They like doing it in front of a group and getting the positive comments and having the opportunity to be creative. That is one of the few areas that they really have a chance to do that (Marlene conversation, May 11, p. 1).

This unwritten standard is evident in the subsequent practice in which the "Three Bears" play group engaged before they performed. During the next partner reading session, they spoke of the need to incorporate more props into the play and made several modifications to their plot, such as getting Goldilocks to run down the stairs of the cozy corner for audience effect. As the partner reading session was drawing to a close, they debated stopping practice to show you the ending, but decided they would have to keep practicing until the last minute if they were to be ready to perform that day (Field notes, April 26, 1993, p. 5-5b).

> ***Kristen*- When you are practicing for awhile like we did we almost knew it off by heart. So it makes it funner because if you only practice it once or twice you sort of forget what to do. That makes it harder because you are trying to remember what you are supposed to do.**

> ***Linda*- I only practiced it three times because they didn't really invite me the first time they were going to do the play (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 1).**

They learn that not everyone is going to agree and sometimes they are going to have to give in. I have talked to them about leadership qualities. I tell them you can't always be a leader. Sometimes you have to be a follower too. You can't always have your own way. You have to step back and say, "Okay, yesterday I got my way. We will do what you want to do today" (Marlene conversation, April 29, p. 5).

During the shared reading time which followed, the actual performance took place. Donald began to narrate the play as the three bears sat on their chairs. Linda spooned out the imaginary porridge with a pencil into the jar which served as an imaginary bowl, and tested it. The bears then climbed onto their imaginary bicycles made of pillows and chairs and began riding off to the apple orchard. Mandy, as Goldilocks, smiled and stepped forward to eat the porridge. She sat on the three chairs, pretending to break Baby Bear's. The same chairs, when scrunched together, became the beds which she tested. She settled into Baby Bear's bed for a pretend sleep. Meanwhile, the scene switches to the three bears who are picking apples off of the book rack. They ran away from some imaginary bees and mounted their bicycles for the return trip home. When they arrived "home" at the place where Goldilocks was sleeping, they discovered the porridge, broken chair, and Goldilocks asleep. When she awoke, Goldilocks ran down the path between the audience members into the cozy corner in mock horror. After a short pause, the scene returns to the three bear's kitchen at supper time. The next morning they awoke to the sound of Goldilocks knocking at the door. She asked to come in and be their friend (Field notes, April 26, 1993, pp. 6-6b).

Through partner reading, your students are asked to become part of a socially responsible group. They are expected to be individuals who engage in collective negotiation with, and support for, one another. As a collective of individuals they negotiate script, props and roles for their performance with and for their classmates. This layer of social collectivity is embedded in another layer of sociality, since the purpose of these plays is the enjoyment of the other people in the classroom. Thus children are motivated to act by two distinct but interdependent layers of social interaction within the classroom. When children perform as groups of actors, they are directing their actions towards the larger classroom community. It is from the members of this larger community that they receive support, praise and encouragement. This serves as a powerful motivator for excellence in performance and a reason to be in community with others.

Any time that you put them in a situation where they have to share with somebody else or talk with somebody else you're encouraging courage and confidence. They are becoming much more confident and they will be able to get up and to talk with people and to read. Another thing is that you don't compare kid's reading ability. You accept them from where they are and encourage them for what they are doing and try to stretch them a little bit. Without the overall belief it wouldn't work. It is just another activity that brings *their sharing out (Marlene conversation, June 16, p. 3).*

> ***Kristen-*** **They don't tease us about our props and they won't make fun of it. Or if someone needs help like Lorna when it was marinated lizards. She didn't know the word marinated so I had to whisper it to her. . . . She needed help but they didn't make fun of her. They didn't tell her that she needed to improve on her reading or whatever. She already knows how to read but sometimes she has trouble on hard words like that one (Shared reading interview, May 28, 1993, p. 3).**

"All of us are Teachers"

Note to the reader: This community conversation tells the story of the roles, responsibilities and rewards which accompany the academic service for the other which is expected of students in Marlene's classroom. It shows some of the tensions which are associated with this service to the other in community and the reasons for Marlene's commitment to this process. I have chosen the title "All of us are Teachers" because this sense of being a teacher for each other came through so clearly in both Marlene's and the children's talk.

The way children are invited to learn collaboratively in your classroom reflects the belief you have in the responsibility which each child should develop for the others' learning. Students are placed in cooperative groups during social studies time and are asked to help each other read and learn from the texts and materials you provide for them. You aim to build children's comfort level in these small groups by having them work with the same people throughout the year which means children have the opportunity to become accustomed to the specific behaviors and needs of their group-mates. This provides a safe and comfortable place for them to be with others. Similarly you provide opportunities for students to work in partnership pairs during math and writing, although these latter groupings are more fluid and temporary. This shows your belief that all children are teachers who have an obligation to serve their fellow classmates.

It goes back to the fact that we are all teachers in here (Marlene conversation, April 20, p. 3).

> ***Terry-*** **People can help each other do things when they are in trouble. . . . In a math question they can help you if you don't know it. . . . Yesterday, when I couldn't quite figure out this math question Carl helped me. . . . He showed me how to do it and we figured it out (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 10).**
> ***Tanya-*** **If they got something wrong you would help them. If I am working with Susan and she got her question wrong I would say "That is wrong, you forgot". . . . If you got it wrong they will tell you this is the right way that you should do it. At the first of the year Kristen did until I got the hang of it, and then I don't need help any more, I just help other people (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 11).**

They are going to have to encounter all different kinds of people in and out of school. They are going to have to learn to work with a variety of people and they are not always going to be able to choose who they work with. They have got to learn to compromise. Sometimes they are going to be able to be leaders, and sometimes they must be followers. That is going to happen throughout their life, not just in this classroom. I want them to have more experience in that so they have more social coping skills. I do know that putting them into more situations gives them the opportunity to interact (Marlene *conversation, May 13, 1993, p. 3).*

> ***Lorna*- We are learning to work together and cooperate, and to not fool around like last year. . . . Last year we couldn't really work together because Ms. G. puts us in our groups and everybody goes EEEWWW! But we learned that when we work with them they are good readers and we'll be happy to work with them.**
> ***Tanya*- Ms. G. tells us why she puts us in groups and with partners. . . to teach us to work with other people. Because when we get a job we will have to work with other people. We can't work by ourselves (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 7).**

A climate of trust is nurtured between group members as students experience a sense of responsibility in helping others and learn to value the rewards of helping others. You see social responsibility in these groups as being at least as important as the academic content they are exploring. This is evident by the way you focus on the responsibilities which they should demonstrate to their peers as they interact and read various social studies materials. This places a high priority upon the way they must relate to one another. Through their helping of one another they learn patience and tolerance for the academic and social needs of each other in your classroom.

My ideal would be if they could work without any guidance from me. I would be the facilitator, giving them things to do. I would not have to put out bush fires or those kinds of things and they could get into groups. They could work on their own and begin to organize themselves to use different roles. They would be able to sort out difficulties that happened in their group and have a better understanding of other people. Sometimes they do that, but not all the time. I am not sure that communities can do that all the time either (Marlene

conversation, May 13, p. 5).

During my time working with Lorna, Edward, Art and Karne, I came to know the value which group support can have for a less academically confident student. Karne had many reading difficulties, but he was continually supported by the members of his group. When I first sat with them during social time, Lorna was helping him pronounce words with which he had difficulty (Field notes, April 7, 1993, p. 2). When I worked with them again later on in the semester, his other group-mates also helped him. Art encouraged him to "sound it out, " and Edward split the words into syllables with his fingers so he could practice pronouncing isolated syllables (Field notes, May 31, 1993, p. 3b).

> ***Edward*- Whoever. . . reads. . . if he or she doesn't know a word then we ask. Sometimes we cover a part of the word and then we ask him to say that word. . . . Then they can probably get it and if they don't, then we have to tell them what the word is. . . . In social studies, we usually help Karne to sound it out and sometimes he just sounds it out by himself and he just gets the word. Lorna, she knows almost every word so we don't really need to help her that much. Art, sometimes when he is fooling around we ask him to stop (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 4).**

> "Hunters, Trap. . . ," said Karne haltingly.
> "*ers*" said Edward.
> "Sound it out Karne," suggested Art.
> "the trees," said Karne.
> "No, see *T-R-E,*" added Edward in a supportive voice.
> "The trees," said Karne again.
> "The *treaties,*" corrected Edward.
> "The Cree people more," said Karne slowly.
> "moved," corrected Edward.
> "to northern Alberta many years ago. They moved to find," said Karne slowly.
> "hunting," said Edward.
> "hunting," repeated Karne.
> "grounds," added Edward.

"in the P. . ." said Karne and then he paused.
"Peace River area," said Art (Field notes, May 31, 1993, p. 3b).

> ***Karne-*** **This group has been good because we have a partner and we share books. . . . They help me by sounding it out. They cover the word, half of it, and that's all. It is okay when they help me. . . . Edward is a good reader, and he is good at helping. . . . I learn to be a good reader (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 3).**

I see it as being much more exciting in this kind of environment then the way I used to teach. When I first came to this school I had the kids sitting in rows. I felt kids wouldn't be able to handle working in groups. I found they can work together and with my modelling and their modelling of what is expected they can work just as well that way. The talk that is involved in the classroom is good talk. It is talk about what they are doing. There is some off task talk but generally it is pretty on task conversation. I find that not as many kids get lost (Marlene conversation, May 11, p. 1).

At the end of this short passage, Karne immediately switched to his role as teacher and began asking questions to the other group members. "Where did the people move?" he asked, and "They moved to *find*?" (Field notes, May 31, 1993, p. 3b-4). He seemed to have little difficulty accepting support from his group-mates and offering whatever support he could in return. He showed no outward signs of lack of confidence when he switched into the role of teacher, despite his obvious difficulty with the reading of the passage.

> ***Edward-*** **We think of very, very, very, good questions. We say who is able to tell us. . . and then they have to answer it. But if they don't know, then we go to another person and if they don't know, then we go to another person and if they don't know then we have to read that part back to them, cuz**

> **probably they weren't listening (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 4).**

We talk a lot about supporting each other at the beginning of the year. Karne is not too shy to do this. (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 7). I find that when you have to work by yourself all the time it is very frustrating, not for the good students, but for the weak students. I feel that education is for everybody, not just for the elite. That is why I am opposed to grouping kids into all the same mix. I believe you need a mix in the classroom. I have been through all those other kinds of things. I feel the Donalds can offer a lot and so can the Cheryls. It stimulates their mind. Look at Melinda for example. Where would she be grouped? What kind of stimulating conversation in group discussions can you have if all kids are like that. Whereas in our group discussion she brings out things. I really feel you don't get that mix when you have those kids segregated from the rest (Marlene conversation, May 11, p.1).

> ***Kristen* - We work together so that the people who know how to do whatever they are working on can help the people who don't know whatever they are working on. We are learning not just math. We are also learning to go. . . around helping. . . people that don't know how to do whatever we are working on, and how to work with other people. When you get a job you may have to work with people who don't know how to do things. . . . When we are together now maybe it won't be as hard when we are older (Math interviews, May 3, 1993, p. 7).**

Group work does not always run smoothly and you accept this as part of students' ongoing journey towards living responsibly in community. Carl, Marvin, Arnold, and Melinda's struggle to learn to live harmoniously and productively with one another is indicative of the challenges and promises of group learning. When I spent some time with them during social studies I heard quite a bit of discussion from the other group members about Melinda's irresponsibility in community. Marvin complained that Melinda wasn't sharing the social studies book with him and wanted Arnold to read with him instead. All three boys told me they didn't want to work with Melinda because she was holding the book by herself and not saying the answers when she should. They didn't say that they gave her little time to respond and refused to let her look at the book if she forgot the answer (Field notes, April 14, 1993, p. 3b).

This classroom conflict shows children's struggle to become more responsible. I reminded them to give Melinda time to respond and to let her look at the book if she was stuck. Their struggle highlights your struggle to give students room to learn group behavior. Arnold, Carl and Marvin were learning that they must work to overcome their individual frustrations with Melinda's slower pace and her more inward-turned behavior for the overall improvement of the group. Melinda knew that she had to work more diligently to share with her classmates. Such experiences would be potentially harmful to community if you were not in the habit of visiting various groups as they worked and using these experiences as moments to encourage appropriate social-academic relationships. It is your recognition of problem situations such as this as potential curriculum opportunities which makes them positive.

At the beginning we do a lot of modelling. I am a really firm believer in that when I'm talking about voices and what it should look like. Their idea of what a quiet voice is and mine are two different things. In their social studies groups in the afternoon I have them work with the group they are sitting with.

They are so quiet you wouldn't believe it. I'm really pleased at how quietly they are working. They read a paragraph each and they will say, "What was that paragraph about? Tell me some things?" I have them paraphrase in their own words and then another person will read, and then they will do the same thing. We have had to do a lot of modelling on that. I'll go and spend time with each group. I show them the kind of things to ask. If they have trouble they can look back in the book and see what it says. They learn to go back there (Marlene conversation, April 6, p. 4).

> ***Tanya-* When there is a question in the book like, "Can the Cree people keep their language and their customs?", sometimes our group will talk about the sentence and then it is a question. . .**
> ***Donald-* The first question that Tanya asked is "Can they keep their customs and their language and have the comforts of the modern day life?" Well we ask everybody and they give their own opinions and all three of the other people in my group except me said that they could, but I said no because if you live in the city it might be a little harder because the only people you can really learn from are your parents (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 2).**

Some social groups remain highly problematic and do not function as you wish, despite your best efforts. For instance, throughout my time in the class, Terry, Sasha and Lana never really functioned as a group. They operated more like three individuals than a group and neither your efforts nor mine were sufficient to get them to work with a group purpose. Perhaps this is because they are such different individuals. Lana is quiet and rather immature in her outlook towards interaction. She is very interested in play and imaginative activities which take her off task. Terry is a more academically-oriented student but his work is usually done in an individualistic way. He is quite an advanced abstract thinker and a strong reader and writer. Sasha is very independent, and likes to have things go her own way. She often refuses to do activities the way others may want to do them, and speaks out forcefully when others do not see things her way. With these three individuals placed together in the same group, three entirely different agendas are being lived out at the same time (Field notes, April 27, 1993, p. 3).

Quite often that group has a hard time, so I spend more time with them and with Carl's group up there, probably moreso than any other groups. When Sasha is here I have to spend time with her group because she is off task most of the time (Marlene conversation, April 15, p. 1).

Lana began to read her section of the text haltingly and Terry supported her reading miscues. During this time, Sasha sat drawing caterpillars until I asked her to put it away. She missed what Lana was reading because of her inattention. When it was Terry's turn to read he immediately jumped in and read his short paragraph very quickly. He had finished it before the others became tuned in to what he was reading. He then showed Sasha where to begin because she was not paying attention. She read her section with several miscues which were corrected by her group-mates (Field notes, April 27, 1993, p. 3).

Sasha's group is a very difficult group. Terry isn't an aggressive kind of leader. I don't even know if I would describe him as a leader. I think he would much sooner not be. I thought maybe I should do something about that group.

They are leaderless (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 12).

Each individual paid very little attention to what the others were reading and there was no sense of connectedness between their parts. I attempted to remind them of the purpose of their activity. However, they continued to pay attention only during the reading of their own individual paragraphs. Individuality was the norm rather than group purpose, and there was no evidence of a will to work together. You know they struggle as a group, and see it as very important that they learn to cope with each others differences (Field notes, April 27, 1993, p. 3).

I wonder how I could make that group a little bit better. They are individuals. Very rarely are they together. I have sat with them quite a bit, and I don't think that when I sit there that I make much difference. I haven't got them so they can get into questioning and talking and maybe I won't. I thought Terry would emerge as a leader but he hasn't. It wasn't that much better even when Sasha wasn't there. They were into their own individuality. I try to insist that they get along. Terry would much sooner take the book and do it himself but I am not letting him have that as an option (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 12).

Although Sasha, Terry and Lana did not come together as a group, most others did. The group interaction between Susan, Donald, James, and Mandy during social studies activity time represents an example of children learning to be leaders. They learned about being teachers by asking questions to others to help them check for their understanding of story events. They also learned about being citizens of the group by being aware of how their actions may interfere with the group rights of others (Field notes, May 25, 1993, p. 5).

This group was particularly good at questioning each other after a paragraph had been read so the other group members would be challenged to connect to the reading. After reading their own paragraph, they would ask questions to the other members of the group. They felt a sense of ownership for their own reading and a responsibility to make sure their group-mates understood it. When James was asked by Susan what the paragraph was all about he did not remember. She told him she would read it again, and after she did, he was able to respond. It was "about education and they learn about our world, how to read and write," he said. She probed further, not satisfied until she had a more complete answer. The children also showed their creativity by asking questions which took their fellow students beyond the text. For instance, after asking "how do you think the computer brings changes to a community?" Mandy probed her classmates for other possible ways to communicate (Field notes, May 25, 1993, p. 5).

> ***Donald*- After every paragraph we ask questions to make sure that people were listening. We would know if we think someone wasn't listening. We would ask them and if they didn't know then we would know they weren't listening and they were fooling around (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 1).**

Susan told Mandy the way she was behaving was interfering with the group's ability to concentrate on their work (Field notes May 25, 1993, p. 5). Later on, Mandy used the power of her teacher authority to choose Susan to answer the question because [she was] "sitting there quietly" (Field notes, May

25, 1993, p. 5b). Two days later, her group-mates again insisted she behave as expected during social studies group work. When she said she wasn't going to ask a question to her classmates, as is your expectation of each reader after they finish their paragraph, Susan and Donald chorused "You have to" (Field notes, April 27, 1993, p. 4).

On another occasion, Susan and Donald took seriously their role as leaders in the group and worked hard to get Mandy to conform to group expectations. Mandy spoke out of turn and Donald asked her "not to yell out." Donald then asked Susan to tell him an answer and she indicated she couldn't remember because "Mandy was fooling around." When Mandy denied this, Donald supported Susan's accusation by saying "Yes, you are, with your toes." Later, Donald complained that Mandy "can't always ask Susan" to tell the answers. Mandy told the group she picked her because she was "sitting there quietly." They were insisting as a group that each other act in such a way as to allow the group to function harmoniously (Field notes, May 25, 1993, p. 5).

> ***Marvin*- Arnold always used to help me in social studies. When we go in our social studies groups, Arnold would only pick whoever was listening. People who were fooling around, he wouldn't pick them because he always watches and reads. He puts one eye on there and one eye on there. I like people like that because I would do that too, and I do. Because when they grow up, maybe they are going to be like that in their jobs and they might get hurt badly (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 29).**

I think the social part when we are reading and questioning has really helped. You can tell now when kids read and share. They tell you words and phrases they liked (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 4). I think that has been a *really good strategy for Donald and Mandy's group. I think that is part of the reason that their comprehension has increased. They often think that it is just the resource room that has done it, but the resource room is a small part of their day (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 5).*

> ***Tanya*- Before you probably think oh I don't like math it is so boring, . . . but when you work with someone like Susan and Cheryl and everybody else, . . . math is so fun now because you have some nice people working with you. . . . Instead of working alone, you can get a lot more. . . than what some people would do because they are working alone. . . . When we work with a partner or two you can just ask them and see if they don't know it, and if they don't know it you could go to one of the grade fours. . . . Working with a partner is so fun. . . . It is not like you are working alone where you feel so lonely, you don't know the answer. . . . If you are with a partner and you don't know the answer you can ask them (Math interviews, May 14, 1993, p. 3).**

I believe two heads are better than one, I always have believed that. I believe that by working with somebody they are both going to pick up something from the other person. For example, when Sasha and Terry are working together, Terry is a much stronger math student, but Sasha's work is much neater. Every time she got her sheet back from Terry, she erased it and did it neater. Eventually, when they are working together, that starts rubbing off onto the other one. Last year I had one Four who did extremely beautiful neat work, and I know that kids that worked with her had much neater work. When you are working in somebody else's book you have to take into consideration their expectations too. I feel there are benefits for all them. It is good for kids like Linda, who haven't got as much confidence to work with somebody else because she knows that if she gets into difficulty there is someone there that *can help her and guide her through it. She doesn't have to wait for me to come and she can get that help from somebody else (Marlene conversation, April 22, p. 4).*

You let your students know that one really good way to see if they have learned something is to teach it to others. It is typical in your classroom for children to expect other students to help them and to freely consult with each other about learning tasks.

Susan and Tanya experienced the joys and benefits of the teaching-learning connection when they worked as peer editors of each other's written response to The Boy who Lived with the Seals (Martin, 1993). They began by focusing on Susan's story. Tanya explained the process to Susan, since she had just recently moved into this class.

> *Tanya*-"If you get them (words) wrong, you look them up in the dictionary and if they are wrong you put the right letter beside it on top of it and then we do our good copy."

Susan looks in the dictionary and they proceeded to collaboratively edit Tanya's work.

> *Tanya* -"The boy who lived with the Seals," she read.
> *Susan*- "I get to look in the dictionary," she acknowledged.
> *Tanya*-"It was so much fun playing with the seals. The boy and the seals went deep down in to the sea were the told tales and *made* (spelled maed) a... ," she read. "Is that right?"she asked.
> *Susan*-"I think," she said.
> *Tanya*-"M-A-E-D," she spelled. "That is right."
> *Susan*-"No it is M-A-D-E," she corrected.
> *Tanya*- "Oh yeah. Okay. Tales, that's probably right."
> *Susan*-"Yeah."
> *Tanya*- "Now I know that is right."
> *Susan*-"Yeah."
> *Tanya*- She continued reading "If it was a sunny day the seals and boy

went on a little *island* (spelled iland)."
Susan-"You forgot the S," (In Island), she offered.
Tanya- "Ohh! I did. Oh yeah. . . (She continues reading) and stay there until night fall . . . and then the seals and the boy. . . Went! That is what I forgot."
Susan-"W-E-N-T," she said.
Tanya- (Adds went to the sentence and reads on). "The seals and the boy *went* down into the sea. This night the seals told a story that they never told the boy. One of the seals said you come from up there on the land. The boy said no I am not from the land. I lived here in the sea with you seals. The boy did not believe that he did not come from the land."
Susan- "Period," she added.
Tanya- "Okay. Days past and the boy *forgot*" (Spelled frogt).
Susan- "Forgot," she said.
Tanya-"No I don't want that" (spelled wrong).
Susan- "Okay." She flips through the dictionary.
Tanya- "F-R right?"
Susan- "F-R-R. . ."
Tanya- "F-R. . ."
Susan-"I know how to spell it right. F-A. . ."
Tanya- "F-R. . ."
Susan- "For . . ., for. . ., For-Age. . . . Here we go. Forget. Forgot . There. F-O-R-G-O-T."
Tanya- "Well I sort of had it mixed up see. I had it right though. That goes there and that goes. . ."
Susan- "And you forgot your O."
Tanya-"Yeah my other O (She continues reading). The seal's story he had very much fun time. He lived with the seals. The End" (Field verbatim transcript, April 27, 1993, p. 1).

***Tanya*- Instead of doing it just by yourself you have help. When you are doing it by yourself it is not very much fun because you have to lift your dictionary in your hand and then you have to do this and then when you find your word you have to. . . write it.**
***Susan*- You can also get help from other people if you don't know a word.**
***Tanya*- It is easier if you have two people. One can do looking up the words and one can do the writing down. It is just so fun (Peer editing interview, April 27, 1993, p. 2).**

This editing shows the mutual learning which occurs in your classroom when you encourage all students to act as teachers. They learn to help others as a central part of their work, and this helping relationship contributes to a sense of accomplishment and achievement which they would not receive if they did their work alone.

Free editing or publishing helps them learn to seek out other people's skills and learn that they can help other people in some ways. That gives them a little bit of power over what they are doing, and a voice in what they are doing. They also have to be able to feel they can trust that person not to make fun of them. At the beginning I am much more careful about who I put them with. I might even let them choose partners, so they feel that they are in control. Whereas now it doesn't matter who I put them with (Marlene conversation, June 16B, p. 5).

Tell and Guess gives the students a chance to show off their expertise as teachers and to develop their sense of leadership in the classroom community. The variety and complexity of words that come up during Tell and Guess is an example of how children respond favorably to the opportunity to be momentary leaders as teachers. Donald brought up Voyager I and II for his word and went on to explain about them in detail. The other students were fascinated with his knowledge. Your students often choose words which few others know, which allows them to be successful because they can share something they alone are knowledgeable about. This activity allows all students to see themselves as experts, and to learn to feel comfortable speaking with authority to the rest of the community; a vital aspect of leadership (Field notes, May 13, 1993, p. 1).

With Donald and the Tell and Guess, that is another way that we bring it out. He loves to give us some knowledge that the rest of us don't have. I think

> *that is another good thing about Tell and Guess that they do bring a different interest. They may never get a chance to share that kind of thing any other place. They do it because they get free reign (Marlene conversation, May 19, p. 7).*

Your students are learners as well as teachers and in this role they are asked to support the leadership of others. By giving them the space to make contributions as both teachers and learners you are asking them to celebrate other people's knowledge when they are in positions of responsibility and to thus see everyones' contribution as important. As part of the audience during Tell and Guess, they are encouraged to comment and add to the knowledge base of words brought up, which affirms and strengthens the contribution of others. Edward, for instance, suggested how composition could also be seen as music, which greatly enriched Karne's definition of it as a written thing (Field notes, May 25, 1993, p. 1). As they act as teachers to their community, they simultaneously experience learning and positive support from their classmates.

Observing these activities showed me the academic, personal, and social benefits which your students gain from being teachers in your classroom community. By being a teacher in your classroom they learn what it means to serve and be served by others. Academically they learn the math content through service from a number of teachers, and they don't have to wait long periods of time for help. Socially they learn to serve other people and through this service, to develop patience, tolerance and understanding of others. Personally they learn to feel good about their achievements and develop a sense of making a difference through community service for the well being of other members of the community.

"Service in the Larger Community"

Note to the reader: This community conversation takes us beyond the walls of Marlene's classroom to show the importance which she places upon building a sense of service to children in other classrooms. This theme helps explain Marlene's desire for her students to serve and get along with students from other classrooms. It also illustrates her students' perspectives about this expectation. The story was named "Service in the Larger Community" since Marlene describes her students' work with other classes as "service" on their behalf.

Numerous opportunities are provided for your students to join and live responsibly with the larger school community. Many of these activities are held with Jane's class. It is normal to hold gym period with Jane's class, to work with them during buddy reading every Friday, and to go on field excursions with them off the school grounds. You also supported the concept of school-wide cross-age learning groups in conjunction with the dinosaur theme, although few of your colleagues were really in support of this. Your students do not remain insular and aloof from the goings-on in other classrooms because you make opportunities for them to work alongside other children and to stretch their responsibilities to other contexts.

With some it is good because they have had to break out of the classroom and go into another one and talk with other kids. Some of them don't like doing that, and it puts them in a situation where they have to push themselves a little bit. If they just stayed and read with buddies in their room they wouldn't have to do that quite as much because they are more comfortable with the kids in there (Marlene, during Jane and Marlene conversation, May 20, p. 2).

> ***Art-*** **Buddy reading is alright but I like to read by myself. . . because you get to read more (Buddy reading interviews, May 28, 1993, p. 1).**
> ***Alan-*** **Well I sort of like it and don't. I like it because you can do plays better and I don't like it because when I am reading chapter books I can't read the whole chapter because it takes too long (Buddy reading interviews, May 28, 1993, p. 1).**

The children entered the gym and those who had brought their gym clothes changed quickly and ran for the gymnastics equipment. The children who had not brought their gym clothes sat dutifully on the stage, awaiting further instructions. There were no squabbles over who should be where, or who was to be first on the various gymnastics apparati. Yet your children were not alone in the gym. They were here as they were every gym period, as part of a combined physical education class with Jane's class. The entrance of these fifty children all took place without a word of spoken guidance from either teacher.

> ***Linda-*** **I like how Ms. G. gets together with another teacher and her class so we can have more gym time (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 4).**

Sharing phys. ed. with the other class I think helps students get along *with each other. They are working with somebody else other than themselves. They are expanding out and developing relationships with more people. Things change when we get into that kind of a situation, instead of just being by ourselves and isolated. You have less space and that kind of thing. I think that's a good part of it. Donald didn't like sharing gym last year. They had a bad experience because the teacher that they were sharing with had a totally different philosophy and Donald picked that up. He says it is okay to share when you can get along with someone. It was very difficult because he sensed that the teachers last year didn't get along. He said "You and Mrs. Hogan did a lot of things together, and you are used to working together." They only went to gym with this one class and that is all they did with that class (Marlene conversation, April 15, p. 5).*

> ***Mandy-*** **Sometimes it is kinda really not fair when Ms. Alan's class comes with us, because sometimes I just want to be with my class. I don't know why but it is kinda boring when other people always have to come with you. You can't be with your same class for phys. ed. or anything (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 4).**

After a few minutes you called them together in the middle of the gymnasium and began a lesson in which they performed various gymnastic forms. They rotated methodically from station to station. The children were quite aware that they had to take their turns instead of running ahead on the springboard, vaulting horses and balance beams. When a squabble broke out between Carl and a boy from Jane's class, Jane got them to sort out their differences. She asked them to get their story straight before they came and talked to her about it. In a short while they had resumed participation, after resolving their conflicts with little input from Jane (Field notes, April 16, 1993, p. 2b).

Jane and I have pretty close to the same kind of expectations for behavior. She doesn't have to work quite as hard at having a quiet classroom because she has a very quiet manner. I tend to be a bit more boisterous and I excite them more. I think that really helps that we have the same expectations for problem solving. We didn't do a lot of talking about it. Basically she is very similar to me in the kinds of things that she expects. From that I know the kinds of expectations she has, so it makes it easier. My kids look at her as the teacher, and hers look at me as the teacher. It is not that my kids won't respect her, and hers won't respect me. The day that the boy in her room was doing the flips in the gym, he was in quite a state. I thought it would be easier for her to handle it because she knows him better than I do (Marlene conversation, April 20, p. 5).

During buddy reading a low chatter fills both your classroom and Jane's. Half of your class go next door to meet their reading buddies and the remainder stay in your classroom and wait for their buddies to come in. Children work with the same person each week, although you did a major switch-around of partners in February. One day, Terry helped Sandra fill in the words she didn't know. Karne and his partner Shirley read in turn, giving him an excellent opportunity to practice his halting reading. Lana told me that she and Krista took turns and that Krista knows some words now. She patiently helps her to try reading different words and tells her the proper pronunciation if she can't get it right herself. They sat together, cooperatively finding objects in a book. "A key that locks. . . two black arrows. . . . There it is, a red ladybug!" they chorused. Donald sat with Arnold and David finding a hidden character in a book and Alan and Darren gazed at a giant book-map of North America. These five boys sat close together so there could be interaction between both groups. Melinda and Angie spun their book to see who would read next (Field notes, April 23, 1993, p. 1b).

> ***Carl*- I like buddy reading because I do plays with my partner.**
> ***Tanya*- I like buddy reading because you get to meet new people and you can help them if they get this word wrong or something.**
> ***Susan*- I like buddy reading because you can be a teacher.**
> ***Sasha*- I like it because you read with a partner and you make up plays and songs and poems and all that. . . and we have got different partners to read with (Buddy reading interviews, May 28, 1993, p. 1).**

Jane and I have buddy read for quite a long while. When she had year ones we used to buddy read and when she had her ones and twos. This year, we decided that we would continue it with the twos and threes (Marlene conversation, April 20, p. 5). This year, it is not quite as broad a range of reading levels. They don't find, with the odd exception, that there are kids that can't read. It is another opportunity for them to have an audience to read with, to interact with and share things from our class. They have traded books back and forth this year. I think it is a good way for them to know other kids in the school. When you tend to stay in your own classroom, you don't get to develop bonds with other kids. You get to see what kinds of things are going on in the *other classroom, whereas if you only stay in your own you don't see those kinds of things (Marlene, during Jane and Marlene conversation, May 20, p. 1).*

> ***Laura* - I like buddy reading because you get to do it with other people in a different classroom.**
> ***Lana* - I like buddy reading because you meet new people and my buddy she picks out good books for us to read. She reads one page and I read another page (Buddy reading interviews, May 28, 1993, p. 2).**

This activity tells us a lot about the importance of responsibility in community with others. A great deal of trust is placed in the hands of your students to be interdependent teachers and learners. Interdependence is a virtue which you nurture continuously in your classroom, but which is especially important during buddy reading because childrens' disposition towards interdependence is challenged in a less familiar context. When Arnold and Manny were reading, Arnold demonstrated social responsibility by asking Manny politely if he wanted to read first. Tanya complimented Clare for picking good books for reading with her. Art and Arnie read several dinosaur books paragraph by paragraph, demonstrating shared responsibility for their task. Kristen and her partner dramatized expressively in the student of the week cozy corner, showing cooperative and creative thought (Field notes, April 30, 1993, p. 2b).

> ***Tanya*- I have learned to be caring and helpful to my partner. . . to help them with a word. . . if they didn't want me to help them read**
> ***Terry*- I have learned to be cooperative with other people and to help them when they want help (Buddy reading interviews, May 28, 1993, p. 5).**

I think it is just an extension of what I am doing. Being able to work with a *variety of different people and not work with the same people is one aspect of building the culture in your classroom. It is just a little broader because you are coming from the outside to the inside (Marlene, during Jane and Marlene conversation, May 20, p. 2).*

When I spent time in Jane's year two-three room there was much the same climate as in your room. They did more than share their books, and became an audience for their buddies. There was a spirit of supportiveness and mutual leadership evident in these encounters that makes buddy reading an important test for joining the larger community. Alan sat in the cozy corner reading and pointing out pictures on the world map to his partner. Karne sat on the floor with his partner beside him in the rocking chair as they read books. Lorna and her two partners read in play voices that dramatized the parts (Field notes, May 28, 1993, p. 2). Despite the fact that Tanya read with expression during buddy reading, she would often stumble over her words. Her partner was always there, ready to cue her. As Carl's partner read The Big, Big Lake Trout (Saskatchewan Education, 1990), he supported her work by putting the cut-out characters on the wall. Arnold and his partner questioned each other from comics in a friendly way to develop their understanding of the comic characters. Kristen helped Karen read easy books by getting her to read most often and choosing simple books for her to read that she felt she would benefit from. When Laura sat reading with her partners, she was helped by them to locate the story in her own copy of the book (Field notes, June 4, 1993, pp. 3-3b).

They have to learn to take turns when they are doing that. They don't always get to choose the story that they want because one of Jane's will bring something to read. They have to learn to be a leader and also be a follower. They are not always going to be able to do theirs first. They have to encourage the other ones to read also (Marlene, during Jane and Marlene conversation, May 20, p. 2).

> ***Mandy*- My partner picked a lot of fun books. . . and we all had a turn. She is a good listener, and she is not like my old partner. When I was reading, she always used to read another book, and she would never listen to me, but my new partner listens until it is her turn. . . . It is more fun when you get to do it with somebody. . . rather than by yourself (Buddy reading interviews, May 14, 1993, p. 1).**

You and Jane hope they will choose to respond to others from outside their classroom in ways that are helpful and socially responsible, yet there is plenty of conflict. Edward, for example, read Dinosaurs: Footprints in Time (Avoledo, 1990) out loud from start to finish, giving his partner no opportunity to participate. He knew that it was expected that he engage in this task cooperatively, but chose instead to dominate the time for his own reading. As a strong reader paired with a weaker reader, he is challenged to be tolerant of his partner's difficulty. Fortunately, you were within listening range and were able to determine his need to be more patient, suggesting he read one-third of the time, and his partner read the other two-thirds (Field notes, April 30, 1993, p. 2b). On another occasion, he seemed to be in a more responsible mood, and he read one book of his choice, and gave his partner the opportunity to read a book of his choice (Field notes, June 4, 1993, p. 4). Donald was another student who did not always cope well with the responsibility put before him. When paired with Arnold, a special needs child from Jane's class, he usually read books that were appropriate for Arnold. At least once though, Donald was reading a novel which was beyond Arnold's understanding and Arnold was frequently tuned out from it (Field notes, June 4, 1993, p. 5). Art was also one who did not always attend to his partner's needs. In his case it wasn't that he dominated his partner, but that Art was tuning in to his own world by fiddling with books and staring off into space (Field notes, June 4, 1993, p. 4).

> **_Donald_- I get frustrated sometimes because my partner will pick out a book and it will be too tough for him to read. He just looks at the pictures. He'll read maybe one page or. . . one of the sentences and want to shut the page but there is some more writing on that same page (Buddy reading interviews, May 28, 1993, p. 4).**

For my students it is good for them to learn to understand and accept Jane's special needs students for what they are, and what they can do. Knowing that they aren't exactly the same as the rest of the kids and being able to relate to them. I think putting kids into those kinds of situations, at least starts helping them to understand that there are a wide range of differences and that you have to accept them all (Marlene, during Jane and Marlene conversation, May 20, p. 2).

> **_Kristen_- My partner is new to our school and she is learning English, and so it is sort of hard. . . . She has a lot of trouble reading some words so I will help her say the words or I will help her sound it out. . . . Sometimes my partner doesn't know a word but she doesn't listen to me. I will tell her it again and she won't listen so I get frustrated. Sometimes she doesn't listen at all and that is when I get frustrated too. Then I ask her to listen or I ask her if she hears a word and if she hears**

> **me tell her the word (Buddy reading interviews, May 28, 1993, p.3). . . . To try to teach someone English is hard (p. 4).**

These children are asked to move beyond their classroom world to meet the goals and desires of others in the realm of service by and for the other. These goals do not always meet in a harmonious way, meaning that the one who is served must also see themself as one who serves. In this dual role, their own goals must often be compromised as new goals are mutually created. Bringing children from the two classes together regularly expects of them that they learn to work with *and* for the other, and to do so naturally, without an expectation of reward. This experience seriously challenges children to try to learn to understand the many differences between themselves and others beyond their own classroom community.

> ***Mandy*- I have learned to work with other people in reading and to get used to getting frustrated all the time (Buddy reading interviews, May 28, 1993, p. 4).**
> ***Linda*- My partner is kind of reading but she is mumbling. . . . She always talks really quiet. She is reading but I can't understand her (Buddy reading interviews, May 28, 1993, p. 2).**

I think buddy reading is an extension of the sense of community that we try and build within the school and within or across classrooms (Jane, during Jane and Marlene conversation, May 20, p. 1). I look at it as sort of like a service that my class was doing for a younger class. Being able to help them improve on something. They could really notice, particularly from the beginning of the year to the end, how much better they could read. Each day that they did that was like a community service (Marlene, during Jane and Marlene conversation, May 20, p. 1).

> ***Donald***- **I have to help my partner read every time. Some words they know and if they come to a word where they are stuck, you can help them sound it out.**
> ***Edward***- **Our job is. . . to try to get them to read. My partner doesn't really want to read, so I have to try to get him to read. Sometimes when he is reading and he is finished I just give him a little book and then he reads it, but sometimes when I give it to him he doesn't really want to read it. . . . I just tell him to and he goes "It's hard". Then I say "well you just read it and then I will help you with the words that you don't know" (Buddy reading interviews, May 28, 1993, p. 3).**

Another significant aspect of joining the larger community comes from the role that you seek for your students during assembly when they share with the entire school community. It is voluntary that they share during assembly, yet many choose to do so. Ten of your students chose to read their literature responses to Listen to the Rain (Martin Jr. & Archambault, 1988) during assembly. Four of the more challenged readers, Karne, Marvin, Cheryl and Mandy were part of the ten who chose to share, which shows the support that special needs children receive in your community for their efforts. It also shows how you nurture their confidence through practice and encouragement. You had those who chose to share line up and practice their responses in front of the rest of the class. These ten students received supportive feedback from you and their classmates, and went into the assembly with greater confidence than if you hadn't taken the time to do this. By providing this time to practice, you sent them an important message that their sharing with the larger community is a valued part of your goals for them (Field notes, June 7, 1993, p. 3b).

Our assemblies are a safe place that allow children to share. It is gruelling listening to the kindergartens, but that is the beginning stage and they *get so they are confident like Linda and Mandy were today (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 3).*

I don't know if the other people do the kinds of shared things and have the kind of voice that kids have in this classroom. I don't know. That is why the assembly compliments what I am doing (Marlene conversation, May 3, p.4). The assembly is just another thing that is extended out of the classroom (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 7).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have shared community conversations which tell stories of some of the elements of gemeinschaft which were evident in Marlene's classroom. "Weaving a Supportive Fabric" is a story about supportiveness in community and it tells how Marlene and her students lived within this supportive context. "Sharing Dark Mountains" is a story about how children found the space to take risks in sharing their thoughts and feelings in this classroom community. "Bringing All Children into the Circle" is a story about the way Marlene strived to help all her students feel a part of the classroom community. "Giving Children Voice" is a story about the value which Marlene placed upon giving her students a say in solving problems and conflicts in the classroom. "Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community" is a story about the importance which Marlene placed upon socially responsible behavior by her students during partner reading. "All of us are Teachers" is a story about the value and rewards which students received from and through academic service to each other in this classroom. "Service in the Larger Community" is a story about the importance which Marlene placed upon learning to live with and help students in other classrooms. Together, these stories tell a larger story of some of the main elements of a gemeinschaft community which were part of Marlene's classroom. The next chapter explores aspects of Marlene's classroom which were influenced by a gesellschaft orientation.

CHAPTER VI

STORIES OF GESELLSCHAFT

Introduction

Note to the reader: This chapter presents four community conversations in which there is evidence of a strong pull towards gesellschaft forces. I have called these stories "Responsibility for Community," "Living in the Outer Circle," "Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance," and "Living in a Small Circle." Although Marlene remains committed to a gemeinschaft world, these stories show how the gesellschaft world is continually creeping into her classroom. They represent fragments of classroom life that reveal her struggle to live a story which promotes the gemeinschaft world amongst these gesellschaft forces, and the tensions which she and her students experience as they live "in between" these social forces.

"Responsibility for Community"

Note to the reader: This community conversation speaks to the tension which exists between freedom to do and be as one wants, and the need to do things which require us to learn individual or community expectations. I have represented this story to help make sense of the individual responsibility which Marlene believes her students must develop as part of their place in this community. It shows the struggle which some children encounter as they live this story as part of their work in this classroom and the resistance which it offers to the gemeinschaft community.

Responsibility for community takes many forms in your classroom. It is developed in the community service type duties which you have children perform to help them gain more of a sense of common property ownership and in the actions, both verbal and physical, in which you have them engage as a service to each other. These duties may take the form of physical work to ensure classroom spaces do not deteriorate or they may represent obligations to complete academic work which is assigned to them.

> *I think that before you can have group responsibility you have to have responsibility for yourself. I know that Sasha hasn't accepted responsibility. Grandma and I accept responsibility for her. I think with some help in writing down and monitoring things she will eventually get into the habit of doing it. Some kids need that extra little help (Marlene conversation, April 29, p. 2).*

Your aim to have your students learn to care for their classroom as common property is manifested in the way you hold them continually responsible for keeping it clean, orderly, and cared for. You attempt to nurture their sense of community duty by cultivating an appreciation for the physical classroom environment and by continually reminding them how these classroom chattels are to be respected so they will be available for the use of all. This notion of common property is reflected in how you continually insist students respect and value the educational materials, classroom decorations, and furniture in the classroom. This happens through a variety of duties which you expect them to perform as members of the community.

> ***Donald-*** **We respect Ms. G's books and all the other stuff that she has put in the classroom and we respect other peoples ideas. . . . We respect the things and their feelings (Student interviews, June14, 1993, p. 9).**

We all own this classroom, not just me. That is part of the reason that I have them clean up at night. I say to them, I don't make that mess but I help you clean up. I don't care whether you made it or not, but I expect you to help clean up our classroom. I really try to work on ownership of the classroom by putting things back where they belong. This gives them responsibility (Marlene conversation, May 5, 1993, p. 5).

One example of the responsibility for the physical environment of the classroom occurs when you have your students pick up pieces of paper and other refuse which inevitably accumulates on the floor each day. When you do this you have them each pick up a certain number of pieces (usually ten) and deposit them in the garbage. This is significant because it shows your desire to have everyone be equally accountable for common property as individuals, regardless of their role in creating the mess. It is also significant because it shows your desire for them to be collectively responsible for what is necessary for their classroom and not to leave this for the janitor or for you (Field notes, May 5, 1993, p. 3b).

> ***Terry-*** **We have to keep the class a clean one (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 2).**

I don't like them leaving things around. I know it is the same at home with their rooms if their mothers aren't on them all the time. I really try to make sure they pick stuff up to make it a little bit easier for the people who are cleaning here. I have talked to them about how it is a really hard job if the janitors have to be picking things up (Marlene conversation, April 27, p. 1).

> ***Edward*- We share with each other. If somebody breaks glass they help each other clean it up. . . . If they can't do something they ask another person to help them. At lunch time somebody broke glass at the back there and they helped each other clean up (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 15).**

By insisting all students at various table clusters have neat desks before they are dismissed you are attempting to cultivate a sense in them of their classroom as a place which *they* have a responsibility to maintain. Doing this by table clusters helps cultivate a "neighbourhood-like" responsibility for the state of the classroom. Students are encouraged to check with the two or three neighbours at their table cluster and to collectively determine and maintain standards for the physical classroom environment, standards which must be congruent with what you believe community standards should be (Field notes, April 21, 1993, p. 1).

> ***Mandy*- We should respect other people's stuff on their desk and respect Ms. G's stuff especially, because her stuff is most of the class (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 6).**
> ***Laura* - Respect other people by trusting them and respect the things around you (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 9).**

I try to get them into the groups because it puts a little more pressure on them when I dismiss them by groups. They have to make sure everybody in the

> *group is ready. It builds responsibility within the group but it doesn't always work. I would like them to say to each other, "Look, you're not ready to go because your shoes aren't up." If I say you are not ready to go, then it happens, but I don't know if the kids say this. They do have quite a few roles, but that is something that I could work on more. They could meet for the last five minutes of the day and talk about whether they have any homework and that kind of thing (Marlene conversation, April 27, p. 1).*

When you request your students take better care of items, you often try to have them see the communal reasons for your concern. You matter-of-factly commented when you "noticed that the chalkboard brush had been sitting on the carpet and made a big stain, [and insisted that]. . . we have to make sure that it doesn't get on there because it will make things dirty" (Field notes, April 29, 1993, p. 1). Rather than chastising them, you involved them in this issue in a way which showed them it was a common concern for the class as a whole to consider. You appealed to their sense of responsibility for the classroom as *their* place, rather than as your classroom, removed from their ownership. You did this again when Mandy showed you pencil marks on one of the placemats you had purchased for one of the learning centres. You likened the marks to vandalism and requested they care for these mats as if they were their own, because you had spent considerable time and effort to find them last summer. You didn't blame them or ask for someone to step forward and claim responsibility, but pointed out how this action was not acceptable in the classroom (Field notes, May 3, 1993, p. 1b). Similarly, when children had forgotten to return some items to their correct spot after partner reading, you insisted they, "Listen to the rules for sharing today. If you are taking things out, then I want you to put them back neatly" (Field notes, April 23, 1993, p. 2).

> *The chalkboard brush and the carpet stain are like today when I noticed about the pop container that had been left on the table. I just want them to be aware and be a little bit more careful. I am not interested in who it was that did it. Just next time, I want them to think about where they are putting things before they put them there (Marlene conversation, May 5, 1993, p. 4).*

You also insist children remain responsible to themselves for their classroom actions. This form of community duty is an example of how children in your classroom must live in groups and as individuals within groups. You are continually working to ensure they be aware of the community standards which you expect of them. When children became excited about speaking out during the cozy corner time one day, you helped them see the ramifications of this action for their community. "We need to learn that we raise our hands to be part of the discussion. This is part of being in groups. If I am at a meeting and everyone is talking out, nobody can hear me" (Field notes, April 22, 1993, p. 3b). On another occasion, when Carl and Donald were messing around with the pillows in the north-east cozy corner you told them their behavior was telling you they needed to stay out where you could see them (Field notes, May 17, 1993, p. 4b). This meant they could expect to return to this spot only after they had learned the standard of behavior which you expected for this location. It was up to them to decide how to behave in this situation, but they would not be allowed back there unless they made the conscious choice to live with this community standard. Similarly, you helped Mandy see the need to make a choice about community standards on her own. "When you know that you are going to have a hard time focusing, you need to sit somewhere else. You know that you and Cheryl have trouble paying attention when you sit together" (Field notes, May 17, 1993, p. 4b).

There are expectations, the same as when you are raising children. You have to love, yet sometimes they are not going to be happy with the choices you make. That is why I try to leave it so they make choices. I will often say to them "You have this choice and you have this choice. I will be able to tell by what you are doing which choice you have made. If you can't make the right choice then I will make the right choice for you. If you have trouble then I will help you. I may need to help you by teaching you how to do that, but if you can make that choice then you don't need my help" (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 6). I said to Carl and Art, "You need my help to behave in the cozy corner. I need to be able to see you so you need to come out. When you show me that you can work independently, then you can go back there." I am really saying to them that they have made a poor choice and need to be where I can watch what they are doing. I always try to work with the fact that what happens right now isn't going to affect what happens tomorrow, or in an hour from now, or in 10 minutes from now (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 6).

You also insist individual responsibility be part of what is expected in your classroom. Individual responsibility connects with your notion of community responsibility, because it is through individual responsibility that they learn about being dependable to others. Individual responsibility in your classroom means to be committed to expectations for completing work and activities which you assign to all individuals.

> ***Arnold*- Ms. G. gives us homework for home, and we have to do that. . . . The people that are done the fact program have to write a paragraph or do a mobile or do a home reading program and they have to give it back to her. . . . If we are going to share at assembly we practice before hand and. . . we have a responsibility to remember what we are going to share and get it ready (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 12).**

You make it clear to students how they will be held accountable for their actions if they neglect to follow through with them. Carl's continual forgetfulness with regards to his homework is an example of this. You see individual responsibility as developmental and are willing to patiently and persistently work with each child to improve their individual responsibility. Your insistence upon individual responsibility reflects the kind of expectations which you hold for your students and the way you insist they live these expectations in the classroom. After forgetting his Tell and Guess for two days you finally insisted Carl stay in at recess and complete it. This was not construed as punishment but as a consequence, as revealed by the way you calmly stated how he "had yesterday and last night to complete it. Now it is on [his] time" (Field notes, April 14, 1993, p. 1). The following week you were again trying to teach him about the obligation he had to himself and to you by sending him home to get his math homework. He had forgotten to bring it back to school and had neglected to do it so he was asked to stay after school to complete it. You gave of your time after school to help him learn individual responsibility for his actions (Field notes, April 22, 1993, p. 1b).

> ***Edward*- If your homework is not finished take it for homework . . . . We are responsible for ourselves.**
> ***Donald*- It is not my Mom's or anything. I am the one who didn't finish it. When you get into Junior High they are not going to give you chances. You are going to have to remember to do your homework and if you don't, you are in trouble.**
> ***Kristen*-It is our homework and if we don't do it. . . and if we don't hand our homework in,. . . then Ms. G. might say we need to practice it still (Student interviews, May 5, 1993, p. 3).**

Carl is the main one who has trouble with individual responsibility. He is going to have to go home to get his work. I can send him because his mother is home. If the opportunity is there for me to send them home then I do. I feel they have to be held accountable (Marlene conversation, April 29, p. 1).

Art had a lot of trouble last year. He never had his fact sheet or his math done. He has made a real turn around this year. I always notice a big difference in year four from year three. If you keep persevering it does pay off. He is pretty good about bringing his fact sheet back. In four they quite often have homework every night. I feel the pay off for Carl will be next year. I just have to persevere. That is part of many teachers' problems that they don't hold kids accountable enough. That is the hard part of teaching that wears you down (Marlene conversation, April 29, p. 1).

Your insistence upon individual responsibility was not confined to Carl. When only four of 13 students had completed their math homework fact sheet one morning you made it clear to them you were not pleased with their inaction and told them they must finish it in morning or afternoon recess, or after school. As they were being made aware of this consequence you also explained your belief in them: "You can all learn facts. It takes some people longer, but anybody can learn them. You will be doing your math test in mid-June and you will need to know them (Field notes, May 4, 1993, p. 1). You situated this small individual act of responsibility as part of a broad responsibility to learn their math facts.

I organize their math facts at the beginning of the year. They might say to me "Oh Ms. G. I am ready to start the next ones," when they think they are ready. I always have them set out in baskets so they know where to get them. They know exactly what sheet they are on. We talk about that at the beginning of the year and I show them where they are. The fours show them too. Some kids need a gentle shove to get onto more difficult ones. The ones that are a little bit more confident will say they are ready to start new ones, but sometimes you have to give them a little push. They have to know where they are and how to do it themselves. It is their job to pick up a practice sheet at the end of the day. I very rarely remind them. I give them something to bring back every day right from the beginning of the year. It is really difficult with the threes until they internalize that they are expected to bring things back. They are expected to have their Tell and Guess here and they are expected to have a fact sheet each day (Marlene conversation, April 29, p. 1).

You also pursue in your students a sense of individual responsibility for their classroom by assigning children turns to sign out the recess box equipment. Students in charge are expected to act as the gate-keeper for these items, but the main ownership remains with the wider classroom community (Field notes, April 23, 1993, p. 2). By placing responsibility for ensuring items are returned with the students you seek to make it clear to them how these items are their property to be cared for, not yours.

> *I want them to be accountable. I really think it is important for them to realize there are standards they have to live up to. It is the same as bringing their homework. It is just part of being responsible and knowing that you can do the best you can. Some of them are organized and some of them aren't. I have to try to do as much as I can to help organize them (Marlene conversation, May 26, p. 1).*

The ultimate goal of a responsible community is for each individual to trust and feel trusted by the other. Your students extended their trust to their classmates, even those who were not their close friends. They felt safe to bring their personal treasures to school. Students brought in family pictures, trophies, troll collections, games, and all sorts of favorite toys. There never seemed to be much concern that they might go missing, despite the fact that they were frequently left unattended in the "Student of the Week" Cozy Corner. This suggests a trust in individuals that is similar to the trust that they give to you as their teacher.

> ***Mandy-* We trust each other with our property and everything on our desks and if we are sick they will not wreck anything of ours. . . . I brought my monkeys to school and everybody is**

> **being nice with them. . . . They are not trying to pull the stuffing out or anything. . . because they know that it is somebody elses and that they should respect other peoples property (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 4).**
> ***Cheryl-* I trust bringing all my stuff to school because I know they won't steal and they won't break stuff. . . . I wasn't worried because I can trust everybody in this class (Student creed interviews, May 6,1993, p. 37).**

Your aim to have children live individual responsibility is also evident in the way you developed your parent-teacher conferences. You have come to believe in the importance of students doing the sharing of their work with parents, which provides them with experience in demonstrating their individual responsibility. By giving your students the opportunity to plan and carry out the first half of the conference you were telling them it was they who owned this conference. Empowering them to take control of their conference stressed to them they were as responsible for, and capable of, explaining their learning as you were. Students were given the opportunity to choose a story to practice so they could read it to their parents. They were also expected to explain the process involved in their literature response to Listen to the Rain (Martin Jr. & Archambault,1988) from their rough copy through to the finished poem (Field notes, June 8, 1993, p. 1). This was the first time in your career you felt your students were ready for such a responsibility and had given them so much ownership for parent conferences. It shows your belief in their need to exert individual responsibility is still evolving, since in all the parent conferences before this, you did the talking. This commitment to children's development as individuals who are responsible to others is heavily based upon the idea of learning to be responsible to themselves.

Randy's dad felt like Randy was a teacher during conferences. He said that he was able to do that because of the kinds of things I do in this classroom. He talked about the fact that I am giving him a good basis so he is able to do fine in school. He talked about the opportunities that children have in this classroom and that is why Randy was able to do the conference the way he did. He was proud of him and he thought that having the other conferences had helped him get ready for this one. He said I am good at accepting them and having them try to be proud of their culture (Marlene conversation, June 16B, p. 1).

"Living in the Outer Circle"

Note to the reader: This community conversation introduces several students who do not fit easily into Marlene's notion of community. Their stories are mainly stories of resistance to community, but one is of a student who is excluded by others because of being different. The tension between gemeinschaft and gesellschaft is evident in these children's struggles to belong, in other students' struggle to confirm or disconfirm their belonging and Marlene's determination to help all of them feel that they do belong. This story title stems from Marlene's metaphor of outer circle, which describes children who do not find membership in her classroom community easy.

Several of the children in your classroom live outside of the community which you imagine for them. Some children struggle with your expectation that they engage in classroom activities which call upon them to act in a caring way which is based on generosity towards the other. A smaller number are struggling to be accepted by the other students in your community. The stories of these children's struggles to resist and belong are a significant part of the larger story of being in your community.

> ***Terry-*** **Some people I don't trust. I trust them and then they don't do it and then I can't trust them to do it (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 11).**

I guess that is how I feel about kids in my classroom when I talk about the inner circle and the outer circle. People in the inner circle are the ones that are in the group and the ones on the outer circle are the ones that are looking in. And you are always wondering how can you bring them into the inner part of the group (Marlene conversation, April 26, p. 1).

Sasha is a child who resists your vision of community by consciously remaining outside of it. Her interest in dominating the group she is working with and her desire to have other children do as she wishes reflects her headstrong and individualistic personality. When she arrived back at school after being absent during the first two weeks after Easter I met her for the first time. Cheryl knew this and asked me, "Did you see that girl who is back in our class? She is really mean to us. She flips her hair and does all sorts of mean things" (Field notes, April 19, 1993, p. 1).

> ***Karne-*** **Sasha just takes the ball and kicks it somewhere else and we have to go get it. I am friends with everyone except Sasha, Cheryl, and Mandy (Student creed interviews, May 6,**

1993, p. 43)

Sasha will do things to other children and then wonder why they don't like to play with her. I think she is slowly learning. If I can role model how to treat kids and have a loving relationship with them then I think she learns from that but she knows that if she does something wrong that I am not going to ignore it. It is like in a family (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 5).

I soon got to know Sasha as a child who could exert a powerful influence upon her classmates, especially Cheryl and Mandy. She often kept Mandy off task during classroom activity times. Your decision to switch Mandy's seat with Lana's so that Sasha would not be able to make direct eye contact with her is an example of how seriously she interferes with the affairs of others, for it was very rare for you to resort to this sort of intervention to solve management issues in your classroom. She can so quickly change the atmosphere of the class (Field notes, April 22, 1993, p. 2).

> ***Sasha*- Sometimes we get into fights cuz sometimes I say something or they start something. . . . One day Cheryl thought I was in a fight with her. I was mad because she was inviting someone else to Athabasca with her and I wasn't. Then when I wasn't really mad at her, she thought I was mad at her. . . because we always get in fights. . . . If we're friends after school, . . . when we come back to school. . . she doesn't like me. . . . She doesn't like me cuz I was mad at her (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 31). Sometimes we get into fights or sometimes we don't. Sometimes we are just friends for about a half a day or a whole day (p. 33).**

Being determined to control the affairs of others sometimes put Sasha in conflict with friends who usually support her classroom actions. One day, when Mandy and Cheryl, who are usually her best friends, chose to drop her from their social circle, it became evident that it was her actions the previous day which were the catalyst for their decision. It had been Sasha's birthday and her grandmother had brought in a case of pop to help celebrate. Cheryl told me Sasha had warned her and Mandy to do what she told them or else they would not get a bottle of pop. She also told them that since it was her birthday she would be the only one allowed to hold my newborn daughter, Erin, when my wife Anne brought her to the school later that day (Field notes, May 10, 1993, p. 3). Although these three girls usually consider themselves best friends, they are almost constantly in conflict with one another. Their friendship changes so frequently that I can never predict when they will or will not be in conflict with each other.

> ***Tanya*- Sometimes Cheryl and Mandy are friends and then they break apart and someone hits each other. Mandy and Sasha are friends and Cheryl has no one (Math interview, May 14, 1993, p.).**

You never figure out why Sasha, Mandy and Cheryl are fighting because one half hour they are the best of buddies and the next they are not. It is constant. I just try to keep it as calm as I can and not disrupt anything that is going on. Normally I just try not to get too involved with most of it unless it is causing a problem for everybody. Otherwise, I just let them sort it out themselves (Marlene conversation, May 26, p. 1).

Despite Sasha's desire to influence and control the lives of those around her, she is positively affected by the community-oriented milieu in which she is immersed. During buddy reading, for instance, she has learned that sometimes working with a partner can be fun. One day when your friend Ellen was subbing for you, Sasha was working with Nella during buddy reading. They practiced reading some nursery rhymes. She struggled to not take over their paired reading endeavor, and initially she did dominate it. When it came time to share their efforts, however, she realized the need to share the reading role if she was to be viewed as operating in a community-oriented way (Field notes, May 21, 1993, p. 1). The sharing aspect to your classroom rewards collaboration and it therefore indirectly nudges children towards a shared role in activities. Children like Sasha who may try to control others get few rewards for this kind of action in your class.

I guess I help Sasha join the inside of the circle by putting her in situations all the time and encouraging her not to lose her temper. We talked at her conference about her need to not always be the leader. Sometimes she has to be the follower. Even if she is understanding this in a small way it is good. She can't always have her own way because kids aren't going to want to work with her if she does. She likes to take more then she likes to give. At the beginning all she wanted to do was take and she didn't give any. Even the slightest bit of an idea that maybe she should take turns in reading is quite an accomplishment. Sasha is never going to be an easy kid. She is always going to be testing you. It won't be easy next year with her either (Marlene conversation, June 16, p. 2).

Sasha's experience wavers between the expectations of community-oriented behaviour and her desire to control the community for her own personal preferences. When faced with a group math problem tracing geometric shapes she seemed to be frustrated with the thought of sharing power with her classmates. The nature of the assignment meant that if she was to participate, she would have to join with the actions and thoughts of her group mates. Terry initially suggested they let Laura trace the shapes and this made Sasha throw down her pencil and exclaim, "You guys can do it!" But after a few moments of watching them do the task, she changed her mind and joined them, helping Laura by holding the shape for her to trace. She again lost her cooperative spirit when Terry suggested that they might want to begin to put the red shapes in place in order to fill up the space. Sasha strongly insisted that this was not what they should do. "No! We are going to make it all the way out to there! (the edge of the paper), she exclaimed." When Terry again tried to influence the direction of their efforts, she said "Tough luck. . . We are *not* trying it all over!" (Field notes, May 27, 1993, pp. 1-2).

Putting Sasha into those situations gives her a little bit more opportunity to have to get along with kids instead of having her own way. I don't know whether she always does get her own way but I feel putting her into that kind of position is important (Marlene conversation, June 16, p. 1).

You continually ask Sasha to enter into relationships that require her to reach out to others by the way you structure your classroom activities. This has helped her see the need to recognize how the wishes of others need to be respected but she does not always recognize the needs of others. This shows how your journey towards a classroom which is more of a community is never ending. Fortunately, your vision for Sasha to experience social interaction in a cooperative context is backed up by the overwhelming number of cooperative opportunities in your classroom environment.

I think this classroom is very important to Sasha. I really think she tries to be friends with everybody but it is so hard for her because she doesn't know how to do it. I think she has learned a lot about that this year. At the beginning she was always fighting and in trouble. I think she would really like to have a good friend, but she is having a hard time finding one because she is nasty to them (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 5).

You recognize that the resistance which Sasha has to living responsibly in community is shared by others. Their struggles become your struggles as you constantly search for ways to have them develop their sense of otherness in community.

All kids have special needs. I try to make sure I know what each child's special needs are and try to make sure they are met. Donald's special needs are to get along with people. It is not academic, it is more social. I just look at all the children and try to think of what I can do to best meet their special needs (Marlene conversation, June 17, p.1). One of the goals for Donald is to be much more tolerant towards others. We have talked about that at conferences. He has never really been in a position where he feels that he needs help from somebody (Marlene conversation, May 5, p. 1).

> ***Donald*- Sometimes when. . . we have to work together I just want to work by myself. . . I kind of have no choice. . . even though the person is slow at math (Math interviews, May 20,**

> **1993, p. 2). I like working quick a lot. . . . I didn't really like slow partners. . . but sometimes you just have to wait up. A fact of life (Math interviews, May 20, 1993, p. 4).**

Carl has a harder time getting along with kids. If there is anybody in this room who is on the outer circle it is him. Sometimes he gets really aggressive and doesn't know how to take out his frustrations other than hitting at kids or throwing a book. We are getting him some counselling and hopefully that will help. His mother wanted it but Carl didn't think he needed it. It worried me the way he reacted to things that didn't go exactly the way he wanted them to (Marlene conversation, April 8, 1993, p. 1).

> ***Kristen-* There are still kids in our class that are nice but sometimes people like Carl can sort of be a little teasing. . . . So I think Ms. G. helped. . . Carl (Baby sharing interviews, June 7, 1993, p. 2).**
> ***Tanya-* Sometimes they'll say "I don't want you to bother me," and they are really really cranky. . . . Like Carl for example (Math interview, May 14, 1993, p. 4).**

I tell Melinda she needs to solve her squabbles with whoever it is. I basically try not to listen unless it is life threatening because she is constantly coming to me. I think she is seeking attention. She is constantly on the outs. She and Laura are either friends or they are not. They are pinching or hitting each other. That is very common for eight year old girls to have a hard time solving things like that and getting along. I try to encourage them to solve their problems by giving them some skills by practicing what to do (Marlene conversation, May 26, p.1).

> ***Linda-* At lunch Lana was complaining to me. . . that Melinda is being a little too mean, so I went and talked to Melinda, and Melinda went up to Laura and said sorry for being mean to you and she said sorry back. . . . I encouraged Melinda to say**

> **sorry to Laura, and then in five minutes they were back together and best friends again. First Laura said that Melinda is treating her meanly and so I turned my head and looked at Melinda, and I said "Melinda, Laura doesn't really like you treating her meanly." I said "Laura why don't you tell Melinda that and maybe she won't treat you in a mean way." And Laura said "Okay." Then she told her, "Sometimes you are treating me meanly" (Student creed Interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 23).**

Everyone starts in a different place. I really think that if you keep persevering you do see the improvement. I think that would come out after having worked on it for a year (Marlene conversation, May 13, p. 4).

The children's struggle to live responsibly in community with others was evident on the playground during a game of two square. When I arrived outside at recess one day, Edward was controlling the service square and apparently had been there for most of the recess. It seemed that none of the boys could get him out. Finally Karne slammed the ball down in Edward's square in such a fashion that he had difficulty returning it. Edward's return volley landed a good foot outside of Karne's square, but Karne could not see this from where he was standing. Rather than saying that Edward was out, Randy and several of the other boys shouted that the ball had landed in play and that Karne was now out. Only Arnold stood up for him, although all the boys knew that he was not really out (Field notes, May 13, 1993, p. 1). This reminded me of the difficulties of transferring social responsibility beyond the doors of our classroom.

> ***Randy-* Edward just wanted to stay in service so I just helped him to stay in service even though the ball went out before hitting the square (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 23).**

People have their pecking order. Edward is the kingpin and Randy is his *best buddy (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 5).*

Marvin remains on the outside of your community, but would desperately like to come in. He is relatively new to your classroom and stands out as one who is not fully accepted in your community. He has had difficulty making friends with some of the other children in your classroom. One day when we went out to the field to begin to play baseball, Marvin asked me if it would be all right if he played. I told him of course he could play and was a bit puzzled by his statement. I had not realized that many of the boys did not allow him to participate with them in outdoor activities. When I asked him to tell me why he had asked me this, he told me that many of the boys were not nice to him. He mentioned in particular how Edward and Randy were not nice to him, but he did say Arnold treated him nicely. Later on when I tried to find out more about this from the other boys, Edward told me the reason they did not want to play with Marvin was because he was bossy (Field notes, April 22, 1993, p. 3). When I began to observe Marvin's interactions, it became clear he was being shunned by some of his classmates. At lunch, for instance, he often sat alone to eat, while the other boys huddled up beside Edward's table and swapped stories and lunch treats (Field notes, April 29, 1993, p. 3). It was nice when I began to see Marvin and Art eating lunch together. I was especially elated when Marvin told me in an interview that he and Art were friends (Field notes May 14, 1993, p. 4b).

> ***Marvin*- Some people are helpful to me. . . . Now I know I am used to this classroom, that is why I work faster. Last time I was new and I was scared and I can't work so fast and they**

> **used to make fun of me and stuff. Now when I am here I work faster and they don't make fun of me sometimes. . . . Now they help me sometimes, but not Edward. Arnold helps me a lot, Randy helps me a lot. . . . Art does. . . . That is about it. . . . When I came to this school Art introduced me, and everything. . . . At lunch time just because I get good stuff I can sit at Edward's desk, or Art's desk . . . . If I sit at someone's desk I have to give them something from me. Half of my lunch. But now when I just ask Art, he says "sure you can just sit at my desk," but I don't have to give him anything. . . . I always sit with Art (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 26).**

Unfortunately this friendship did not last very long. One day at lunch, not long after the discussion about Art being his friend, Marvin came to me and confided that Art had led the class in teasing him about how his ears moved when he ate. He told me how the girls, who usually were off by themselves at lunch, joined in the teasing by making rabbit ears behind his head with their fingers as the boys teased him verbally. When he came and talked to me at lunch he began to cry. I consoled him, and told him I would talk to you about this when you came back from lunch (Field notes, May 25, 1993, p. 3b). You immediately dropped the planned activity after lunch and took the children to the cozy corner. After asking him if he felt okay about discussing it, you proceeded to ask the children to tell you the details of what had happened at lunch. They slowly began to tell you how they had teased him. You referred them to your classroom creed and asked them to reflect upon how their actions had violated their own creed.

> ***Cheryl-*** **Marvin. . . was eating lunch and everybody was making fun of him, and I said it wasn't nice of them to do that. . . and I said. . . you shouldn't do that because you are hurting his feelings.**
> ***Kristen-*** **It started at lunch one day. It was because they were making fun of his eating. . . . Art kept walking around and**

> **telling people and they would laugh. I didn't really believe it was our class. . . . I didn't stay for lunch that day but I think it wasn't good (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 14).**

I told them that Marvin should be able to feel that he can come to this classroom and have support by somebody in here. I asked Randy, Edward and Terry why they didn't say that it is not appropriate to treat him like this. I told them we are talking about somebody in our classroom that we care about. I told them they are just as much to blame as Art is because they didn't do anything about it. By sitting there, it looks like you are taking his side and thinking that it is okay to do this (Field verbatim, May 25, 1993. pp. 1-2). They were just as guilty not acting. You get the same impression when nobody will stick up for you (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 6).

> ***Edward*- We didn't like Marvin. . . but I forget the reason. . . . Every recess we were playing with him. . . but Terry won't let him. . . . He just says you're not playing. . . . I just stood there and said poor sport to Terry. . . . I feel like just let him play (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 16).**
> ***Randy*- Most of the people in our class don't like Marvin, but I don't know why (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 22).**

You appealed to their sense of community and asked them to think about their approach towards a member of their community and to approach him differently in the future. You publicly stated that you expected them to be more helpful and supportive from now on.

> *Marlene*- When we say that everybody has a purpose and is of value, that means you are the ones who have told me time and time again that it doesn't matter what a person looks like on the outside, it is what is inside. If you are telling me today because his ears move when he eats that you shouldn't be friends with him again, or be nice to him, I am absolutely horrified, just horrified. . . . That makes me so sad I feel like crying. I expect a lot more from you . A lot more. . . . It looks to me like this lunch

> room needs to do some serious thinking. . . . Next week we will try again, and I don't want to hear that Marvin has had to ask "Can I eat with you?". . . You need to have a good look at your behavior and decide how you. . . can change it. Don't go along with the group, make your own decisions. Why not find something that is neat about that person. . . . Tolerance, understanding, and acceptance, that is our key idea. You do not have. . . it all until you can understand. . . that person, and you don't understand anyone until you get to know them. You certainly don't get to know them by making fun of them. You need to stand up for people in our classroom, and don't let other people dictate who is going to make fun of them. . . . It only happens when you allow it to happen. You are supposed to be looking after each other in this classroom, not just those you choose to look after, but everybody (Field verbatim, May 25, 1993, pp. 2-4).

I wonder so much about situations like this in which children are outside of the circle and other children consciously exclude them. It seems we have such difficulty getting children to see the damage they can do to others. You engage your students in a dialogue to re-think their actions and see this part of your work as a constant struggle to create a more harmonious place. Yet you recognize your classroom will never fully arrive at a place where all children treat each other equally and fairly. There will always be situations that deviate from what you would like to see happening, and this is where you see one of the greatest challenges in teaching.

I think they realized that they were mean and I hope that the chat made a difference. I would hope that they would think about it. You would just hope after that that they do. Maybe they will think twice next time before they do something like that, but I know that there will be another time. Just because you talk about it once doesn't mean it isn't going to happen again. Those are the kinds of things that you have to keep working on. Kids aren't just going to pick that up from a few little chats about it, but I would hope that one of them might be *more aware and might stand up for them. I really believe that, if you let it go on that it is like saying that you support it (Marlene conversation, June 16, p. 2).*

It is not easy to live responsibly in community with others. From time to time many children struggle with this expectation; some do so constantly. One of the challenges in building a responsible community seems to be to try to recognize when children are struggling to be more collaborative and to help them see other ways of being with each other.

"Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance"

Note to the reader: This community conversation explores the tensionality between gemeinschaft and gesellschaft that was evident in Marlene's classroom when she asked her students to be teachers. This story illustrates the dilemma which Marlene must live with as she recognizes the need for gesellschaft to co-exist with gemeinschaft, and continually deliberates on the spot to determine when each force will prevail. This story is about the on-going struggle which Marlene and her students are constantly living as she senses the need to be sensitive to their differing needs and intentions. It was named after Marlene described her desire to have her students focus more upon accepting each other, and less on their individualistic desires.

There is considerable tension for you in your work between individualism and community. On the one hand, you have a desire for children to experience a cooperative group-oriented education in which the common good is paramount. On the other hand, you recognize the competing desire which many of your students hold for activities which give them room to be more removed from and independent of the group. You are, therefore, always questioning the relative merits of each of these forms of experience. At what moments should you ask them to experience your vision for a communitarian form of education? At what moments should you let them experience more individualistic and competitive desires and intentions? You live in-between these visions, deciding in some cases to provide educative experiences which meet with your standards, while at other times, giving them room to experience more individualistic choices. This is the tension between me and we.

Although there is a strong pull towards individualism evident in your classroom, it is not shared by all students. Just as your notion of the ideal educative experience may differ from the ideals of many of your students, so too do their individual ideals often differ from each other. Some are very individualistic in orientation.

> ***Edward*- I didn't like switching books because it slows me down. . . . I am finished and they are still writing the question down (Edward interview, April 30, 1993, p. 1).**
> ***Lorna*- I didn't really want to work with Edward because he doesn't always help. He just explains half the questions and leaves the other half so we could do it. . . . He decided to help me and half way through he just stopped and then I had to go ask somebody else (Student interviews, May 5, 1993, p. 7). That is mean if other people do it by their self because if you have trouble on something in your math and you don't know about it then you will get the word wrong if you just put it down. If you have a hard word you can ask him or her and they might help you (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993,**

> **p. 8).**

Others are more communally oriented.

> ***Susan-*** **I was happy because I didn't have to work by myself and I had someone to work with and to help me.**
> ***Lana*** **- There's people there that I could talk to. Then I could understand what I am doing instead of nobody helping me (Math Interviews, May 20, 1993, p. 2).**

The struggle to achieve responsibility in community is exemplified by the math partnerships in which students work from time to time. By setting up mandatory partnerships between peers who would not normally work together, you are engaging them in community activities which may serve as a way to build patience and understanding for the other. You try to get them to take responsibility for the academic work of peers by switching books after each question and having them check each other's answers. If their answers are different, they are expected to try to figure out why this is so. It usually happens that you pair a stronger academic student with a weaker one, which gives the stronger student a great deal of responsibility, although you do not stress this.

> ***Edward-*** **Sometimes we have to have a partner. I like working alone because I. . . find I do better work when I am alone. . . . It is much faster because they don't ask you much.**
> ***Donald-*** **Usually when we get partners we have to switch books.**
> ***Edward-*** **That takes a long time. . . . There are partners that I work really slow with, . . . Marvin and Lorna. . . . Some. . . people who don't know their facts makes it frustrating.**
> ***Donald-*** **We want to go ahead because we know how to do all this. . . but we have to wait up for them because they don't understand.**
> ***Edward-*** **We have to do one question in each book and then we have to switch. Then we have to write one question in our book but then usually when you are finished your question they are only on the first step (Donald and Edward interview, April 27, 1993, p. 1).**

I have talked with them about the fact they are not always going to like who I ask them to work with. In life you are going to work with people you may not want to work with. You have to learn to be able to get along with those people (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 7). I made sure for quite some time I assigned them a partner that knew how to do it. They had to work with that partner and switch books. They do one question in their book, one in their partner's book, and they compare the answers. If the answers are right they go on to the next question, and then they switch books. They don't like that much because it slows them down but it gives them the strategies for doing it. I have them do that, particularly when we are working on new skills (Marlene conversation, April 8, p. 5).

> ***Susan-*** **Even if you get someone you don't want to be with you can still work with them cuz they will still be friendly (Math interview, May 14, 1993, p. 2).**

The learning that can develop when a stronger and weaker student are paired is exemplified by the experiences between Terry, Carl and Melinda. The way that Terry and Melinda work together when you ask them to sit with partners and switch books shows how your aim to develop a sense of responsibility for the other is lived out in practice. Terry is a stronger math student than Melinda and always finishes questions first. He would look at Melinda's answer once they had switched books and when mistakes appeared in her work he would say the correct answer and correct it in her book. He would not explain why the mistake was made and seemed bored and indifferent to the high number of mistakes she made. Melinda seemed content with the fact that he would correct her work and made no effort to figure out what she was doing wrong. Although potentially this situation could make no contribution to her math learning, you observed it happening and asked that he be more vigilant by getting her to correct every other question (Field notes, April 15, 1993, p. 1b).

One of the things I try to teach them when I am having them work with exchanging their papers is that they are not to go ahead. I tell them that I am not concerned about how much they get done in the day. I would rather have them know it and only getting two done. That is why I have them alternate and go at whatever pace is set (Marlene conversation, April 20, p. 4).

Donald also struggles with the expectation that you have for him to work cooperatively with a partner. When I asked him how he felt about switching books with a partner after every second question to check answers he was very adamant that it was not his preferred way of doing things. "I like it better in my own book" (Field notes, May 10, 1993, p. 1b). Later on that morning he demonstrated the frustration he was experiencing as a result of being asked to work cooperatively with Marvin. When Marvin asked him to help him with a question, Donald responded quite negatively by saying "Go ahead, just do it your own way. It is your book!" It was very timely that you happened to be passing by his table when he said this and you suggested to him that his comments were not being very positive (Field notes, May 10, 1993, p. 2). His intolerance for helping others came to the surface again when he was trying to explain a math problem to Marvin. As I sat beside them he muttered impatiently, "I explained it to him twice and he *still* doesn't get it!" (Field notes, May 31, 1993,

p. 2). It is not that he is unhelpful, but rather, he wishes to give help to others only when his individual work is completed and his self needs are met.

> ***Donald*- We want to go ahead and we know how to do all this,. . . but we have to wait up for them because they don't understand (Donald and Edward interview, April 27, 1993, p.1). . . . I like working with Karne mainly because he is really fast like me now, so we can work together and get stuff done really fast. . . . I like to do it pretty quick. I don't like waiting around and stuff (Math interviews, May 3, 1993, p. 4).**

Carl's work with Melinda as a leader in math shows both the frustration and the rewards that can take place when children are asked to work with others who are challenged. Melinda was getting almost every question wrong and again she did not really appear to be working to achieve a sense of how to do the questions correctly.

> "Wrong," said Carl in a frustrated tone after her third straight mistake.
> "You can't just say wrong. Maybe yours is wrong," said Arnold, who was also sitting at the same table. This served as a reminder to Carl that there was a teaching obligation to his partnership with Melinda, and he proceeded to help her.
> "What is nine minus six?" he asked.
> "Three," she replied.
> "There! You got the rest of it right."
> "You forgot to cross out the____ ?" he asked, after she had forgotten to borrow on one question.
> "Four," she said.
> "Are you done?" he said.
> "Yup," she replied.
> "It is wrong," he sighed. "You forgot to borrow from here."

After Arnold had reminded him of his obligation to Melinda, Carl did use a more teacher-oriented approach for the rest of this math session. He insisted that she verbalize the steps in this math question. Although the way he sighed when she got the answer wrong showed his impatience with her, he continued to explain the steps necessary in subsequent questions (Field notes, April 20, 1993, p. 3). This suggests that he does recognize his role of being a teacher, although he may need to be reminded to carry it out from time to time by peers.

There is a lot of tolerance but what I would like is more acceptance. There is a big difference between them. I think you have to have an understanding of the person before you can get to acceptance but you have to work with a person and get to know and understand them before you can get to acceptance (Marlene conversation, April 22, p. 4). I think it teaches them patience and tolerance of others. They learn that everyone isn't exactly the same and that they were at that point at one time too. That is why I don't dictate to them how much they have to get done in those situations (Marlene conversation, April 22, p. 4).

> ***Lorna*- I depend on people to help and to be nice to me and to not call me names. It is kind of like seeing how to learn to work with people because maybe when you have a job you might have to work with people (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 5).**
> ***Kristen*- When Cheryl is reading she likes to take the book like this and read (pulls it over close to herself so that others can't see the words), and she says if she gets a word wrong that it is correct and she just likes to go on. . . . It sort of makes me happy because she is trying on her own, instead of asking for help, and she also makes me sort of mad because she doesn't really want anyone to help her, so we can understand it more. Once it said D'or, and she said Doctor, and we didn't really understand her so we got her to read it again (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 7).**

During math children often work with partners, but you also recognize their need to freedom of choice. You provide times for them when they are not expected to work with partners and you switch partners regularly so that they will get to work with their friends as well as people they might not regularly choose to work with.

Being able to get along with them. I think that is part of it. I have always let kids work together in math, but I didn't give them a specific partner to work with. I think you could ask anybody in this classroom if they needed help and it wouldn't necessarily be the same person they go to. It wouldn't always be me either (Marlene conversation, April 20, p. 3).

> ***Tanya-*** **It is fun because you can work with different people in the classroom like Susan and Cheryl. I don't usually work with Cheryl because she is usually working with somebody else. So it gets time to help other people instead of just working with the same people every day (Math interviews, May 14, 1993, p. 1).**

Randy, Arnold, and Edward enjoy working together on math and would be content to work with no one else if you let them. However, you insist they learn to work with others. Edward, for instance, does not like working with Lorna during math but you keep him working with her from time to time (Field notes, April 28, 1993, p. 2b).

Randy is a very strong student and so is Edward, and they just don't have any understanding for others in difficulty (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 7).

These three boys have an affinity with each other. Since they are all good at math, they rarely slow each other down. Thus they find it exciting and rewarding to sit beside each other and race through their questions, checking with each other occasionally to see who is farthest along, or who knows how to do the more difficult questions.

> ***Edward-*** **Sometimes when me, Randy, and Arnold are working together we help each other. Arnold is the one who needs the most help. One time when we were doing something back in the two digit numbers, we had this "Just for Fun" thing, and Arnold needed to know about question one. Then we did the squared paper thing and then he. . . did something to his square thing that screwed us up and then we had to take it home for homework (Edward and Karne, Math interview, May 10, 1993, p. 1).**

Many students often prefer not to work with partners, which shows the frustration that they experience with this expectation. Your sensitivity to their frustration is evident by your flexibility in assigning partners. When Terry asked you if he *must* work with a partner in math you said no (Field notes, April 19, 1993, p. 2). Students' frustration with working with others is partly related to the vastly different levels of performance amongst students, and the varying rate at which they complete questions. Many students are in a rush to get their work done, and seem to feel slowed down when they are expected to help others. When Edward was paired with Lorna, for instance, she could fall two pages behind him by the middle of a half hour math lesson (Field notes, April 29, 1993, p. 1b). If he had to switch books with her he ended up waiting for her after he did each question. He resents this because he really dislikes not finishing his math in class and having to take it for homework.

> ***Edward-*** **We had to check every three questions. . . . If people are fairly slow we don't like to check answers. It is two minutes later before they are finished and then we have to wait before we. . . go on (Math interviews, May 3, 1993, p.1). . . . It is faster alone and you don't have to get homework (Edward and Karne, Math interviews, May 10, 1993, p. 2).**

Edward will do anything not to have homework. He hates having homework. His dad loves him to have homework. If he has homework he'll say, "Oh you will make my dad happy tonight" (Marlene conversation, April 14, p. 6).

> ***Edward*- It depends on the partner. If it is someone like Sasha, I don't really want to, but if it is like Kristen, Donald, Arnold, Randy, or Karne, that is good at math, I like to work with them. . . . When they go real fast and all of the questions are right, I really like people that are like that (Student interviews, May 5, 1993, p. 1).**

I feel it is important that people learn to get along and be willing to work with each other. Because I believe in those kinds of things, I believe I need to give those kids that kind of experience. I didn't have those experiences as a child growing up in school. I really believe that relationships are important but you have to work at them. Whether it is friendship, marriage or whatever, you have to work at those kinds of things. There is give and take in all of them. That is why I run my classroom the way it is, because I know you can't always have your own way and you have to be willing to compromise. I try to put them in situations so that they have to learn that; hoping they will be better people for it (Marlene conversation, May 26, p. 4).

> ***Donald*- Some of the girls are real stubborn to work with.**
> ***Edward*- Because they go no!!!!! And then yes!!!**
> ***Donald*- And then they say we don't need your help and then they get it all wrong of course.**
> ***Edward* -Well Susan is pretty good to work with, and Kristen and Tanya.**
> ***Donald*- Some of them just don't want help. Especially if they have to work with boys and they say, "Oh I don't need your help," and then they go and do it by themselves (Donald and Edward interview, April 27, 1993, p. 3).**

Giving them free choice of how they will work in math results in the surfacing of very different preferences among your students. When you open up the option to work alone or with a partner of their choice children will usually choose to work with friends, but a few are delighted that they can work alone. This pattern is typified by the choices made by the fours during a free math activity. Donald was pleased to remain alone to do his math. Art enticed James off to the dinosaur center. Kristen, Linda, and Lorna worked together at Kristen's desk area. Randy and Edward worked together by the window. Karne, Marvin and Arnold started out together, but Marvin was left behind and the others went to work at the table by your desk (Field notes, June 7, 1993, p. 1).

> ***Kristen*- In math. . . when we ask Ms. G. "Do you have to have a partner?". . . and she says "no, you can work by yourself," then we can work by ourselves or with somebody, and I usually work with Linda (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 19).**

I give them lots of choice who they work with. I say to them, by the end of the year I expect that you will have worked with everybody in this classroom. So I try to set up things so they will have to work with everybody. They will also have lots of choice of who to work with too. For example in partner reading, I don't ever dictate who they read with. That is their choice (Marlene conversation, May 13, 1993, p. 3).

> ***Mandy*- We are always sitting together and we always have to work together and we listen. . . . Everybody had a chance to work with everyone in different groups (Student interviews, June 14, p. 3).**

It is not uncommon for children to offer advice to one another. When given the freedom to choose if they wish to sit alone or with others, some will work alone but many will work with a partner. However, even those who prefer to work alone will help others when asked to do so. Some who work independently still sit together to support one another, while others sit alone but are available for consultation.

The three year four girls, Linda, Lorna, and Kristen, usually sit with each other and chat continuously about their work. One day, as the three of them sat together, I could hear Linda and Lorna chatting back and forth about the questions they were doing. All of the year four boys sat at their regular desks working quietly, but when they encountered difficult questions they got up from their seats and found someone to discuss possible ways to tackle the questions (Field notes, April 14, 1993, p. 2). They usually help each other whether you assign them to work with others or not because they recognize this as an efficient and sensible way to make sure they get their work correct. The children know that it is your expectation that during math seat work time, when you are in the cozy corner with the other students, they get help from other children rather than from you, because you are usually busy. This is partly a management issue, because when the year threes are doing seat work, you are instructing the year fours, and vice versa. This does not mean they are totally independent, but it does mean there is interdependence amongst the group. They rely heavily upon others for assistance and are sought out for help by others in the classroom. In this way, they get lots of practice working with other children and not only learn more about math, but also learn a great deal about relating to others.

I think there are lots of times that we want to be individuals and then there are others in here that would sooner do it with somebody and never by themselves, and they have to be able to learn to do things on their own (Marlene conversation, June 16B, p. 6). You have to look at it for each individual and try and figure out what the happy balance is. You need to put them into situations in which they can grow (Marlene conversation, June 17, p. 1).

> ***Tanya-*** **Ms. G. puts the year fours into partners and so does she put the year threes into partners. She is making us work with other people instead of just the same people everyday (Math interviews, May 14, 1993, p. 2).**

Quiet reading is a time for children to experience literature which they choose, and to read individually, uninterrupted by others. However, you exert a silent influence over this time by virtue of the fact that you have invested thousands of dollars in high quality children's books. These books tell a story of relationship and caring and reflect your desire for books that explain ways for people to relate to one another. The Patchwork Quilt (Flournoy, 1985), Koala Lou (Fox, 1989), The Two of Them (Aliki, 1979), Knots in a Counting Rope (Martin Jr. & Archambault,1987), are but a few of the books that you prominently display in your classroom. These books give children a curriculum to select on their own that teaches about relationships. They are permitted to choose books to read from your collection, from the library, or from home but by surrounding them with these high quality books of yours, and by prohibiting comics, you are quietly enticing them to read quality literature. Providing a choice to pick from these sources is your way of giving them some say in their reading and making this an individualistic task, yet the vast majority of students choose to read your extensive collection, probably because they are of such high quality, are immediately available, and are cherished and shared by you with such love.

James read very well the other day. He had a book which maybe was a book that I wouldn't recommend or choose to pick, but he is reading and that is the important thing (Marlene conversation, May 3, p. 10). The wonderful thing about bringing a new piece of literature to them is that it doesn't stay with the regular vocabulary that they had. It gives then the opportunity to reach out and see other language (Marlene conversation, May 26, p. 3).

You try to balance your students' desire for freedom of expression with your own desire to have them create things which reflect your goals for them as learners. This is very evident in the struggle which you have had with yourself about appropriate writing opportunities in your classroom. You know that they want to write freely and you have let them do this, but you also insist that they produce colorful and expressive writing through responses to literature. The literature which they respond to satisfies your expectations because it tells a story of relationality and caring.

> ***Terry*** **- I like coming here because I like writing in the folders I really like that (Student interviews, June 14, p. 2).**

I have done the reflection in books because I got sick and tired of reading Ninja Turtles, Mario Brothers, Packman and all that. I said to them, "I *don't want to read that. If you want to write about it once or so that is okay." When they take their writing folders out, I won't dictate what they have to write. I generally let them do what they want but I don't give them a lot of opportunities to write in those.*

> ***Marvin-*** **When we write in our green binders, Randy and Edward would always work together, and Arnold would be by himself. Then they would make some stories about all three of them only. Like Arnold, Randy, and Edward the crime fighters. But once Arnold, and Edward got into a talking fight. . . when we were writing in the green folders. Edward accidentally said something really badly that hurt Arnold's feelings, and Arnold said he was going to write something really bad about Edward (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 26).**

Most of it is more structured response. I find they get much better descriptive language. I've talked a lot about describing things. If you expose them to really good literature, you are going to get that. Whenever I am reading to them, I stop and talk. I might say "Now wasn't that a beautiful sentence" (Marlene conversation, April 8, p. 6). I like to give them a little bit of time so that they can work on writing what they want to. I figure they should be able to have some choice in what they want to write too (Marlene conversation, June 17, p.2).

The tension between freedom of choice and control is noticeable in the way that you organize quiet reading time. You have set up a weekly timetable rotation that allows children to have access to the cozy corners. This allows you to give each child equal access to the quiet and intimate corners of your room but also provides order and prevents over-crowding. This is illustrated by the following fragment of classroom life. Melinda sat contentedly in the south-west cozy corner, dancing the three bears along the page of the text as she quietly acted out the story. Donald lay on his back in the south-east (student of the week) cozy corner amongst Shawn's toys, novel in the air reading to himself. Art read a Ninja book propped up against pillows in the north-west cozy corner. Lorna rocked peacefully in the rocking chair in the north-east cozy corner, methodically chanting off Bill Martin Junior stories. The other 17 children read at their desks, knowing that their turn would come to read in these special places on the day scheduled for them (Field notes, April 21, 1993, p. 2). This shows one way that you have orchestrated a balance between students and teacher control. It allows you to meet their needs for freedom at the same time that you ensure quiet for the overall classroom community.

The rotational basis for quiet reading is an organizational thing for me. Otherwise they are always harping at you "Can I go such and such a place?" So I decided at the beginning of the year that I would make up a schedule from Monday to Thursday. That way they know when their turn is and you don't end up always having the same kids going. I used to do it by who is ready but now that is how I pick them (Marlene conversation, April 20, p. 2).

Kristen's role as a teacher of Marvin highlights some of the positive academic benefits of peer tutoring.

> *Kristen*- "Okay Marvin, do you know how to round?"
> *Marvin*- "Yup."
> *Kristen*- "First you have to write down the question. If it is any number above four, then you round to the next highest number. If it is below five you round to the number. Did you get it Marvin? We have to wait for Marvin."
> Linda puts the question 18.3 minus 0.9 down and begins to write down

the answer.
Kristen- "No you don't round down, you round up," she says to Linda.
Linda- "Okay." And she begins to borrow.
Kristen- "No, hang on, you don't do that (Erases the borrowing lines). Okay you can't round any higher so you put 18 down there. So that becomes one, so 18 minus one."(Field notes, April 26, 1993, pp. 1b-3).

Kristen sat between Marvin and Linda and took charge of helping them to do their rounding questions. Marvin had missed the lesson on rounding the day before, and was in need of help. Kristen did not hesitate to take responsibility for their learning. By the tenth question, he could do them independently, yet you hadn't taught him this. He proceeded to do most of the remaining questions on page 321 correctly.

> ***Kristen*- If someone needs help then you can help instead of Ms. G. or someone else. We teach them to read or do whatever they need help with (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 7).**

When it is a hard concept for them to catch, I will partner them up with somebody that has got it so they always have that one on one situation. They keep track of what they are doing and coach them through. When I do that I don't give them as much work as I would if they were working on their own because they are doing a lot more talking and explaining . What I usually do is I have them work with the same partner for a week, and then I switch the partners. I don't like to have them work with one partner one day and then switch the next day. I feel they need more continuity but I don't think it is fair for them to have to have the same partner all the time because some partners are harder to work with than others (Marlene conversation, April 20, p. 2).

By asking them to move beyond their preferred partners occasionally, you are providing them with the opportunity to learn to work with someone whom they would not normally choose to associate with or perhaps even care for. This is one way that you are asking them to move towards otherness, because it challenges them to put aside their preferences and to try to listen and respond to the needs of others. The way you decide to make changes to partners represents your continual reflection upon how they are feeling about these experiences and what their needs might be at this particular time. Your decision making is based upon a recognition of their need to grow in their relationships with others but it is also based upon a recognition that students desire a say in who they work with and sometimes they wish to work alone. For instance, when Kristen had been helping two needy partners in math for several days you mentioned to her at the start of math that "I know you are frustrated when there are three of you so I will let you work with two today, okay?" (Field notes, May 11, 1993, p. 1).

> ***Kristen*- I don't like working with partners that need a lot of help, but just a little bit of help because I get all mixed up. . . . Linda needed help on rounding and Marvin needed help on rounding and I didn't know who to help first because Linda forgot how to round and Marvin didn't know how to round. It is okay except for when I have two people at once. That gets sort of hard. I feel frustrated (Math interviews, May 3, 1993, p. 6).**

Sometimes I'll let them choose who they are working with and sometimes I will choose. I just sort of think about what they need at this time. Sometimes when I am having them edit work, I'll partner them up with someone who is very strong or with someone who is very weak (Marlene conversation, April 6, p. 4). I *like to have them work with someone for a week and then I have them switch and work with somebody else so they have an opportunity to work with everybody. If they get a partner that really needs a lot of help then they are not bogged down for more than one week. They have all pretty well worked with everyone so I started over again and had them switch groups this week (Marlene conversation, May 19, p. 1).*

> ***Art-*** **I prefer to work with a different person like James, because he is my friend.**
> ***Karne-*** **I prefer to work with a partner like Edward because he is smarter.**
> ***Lorna-*** **I wouldn't like to work with a partner but I would also like to work with Kristen. . . because she is my friend and whenever I have trouble she doesn't yell at me, she just helps (Student interviews, May 5, 1993, p. 5).**
> ***Tanya-*** **You don't have to work with a partner or people every day because we work with them twice or three times (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 8).**

Donald sometimes makes the conscious decision to remain isolated from much of the social interaction during partner reading so that he can meet his own needs. When I first began to interact with Donald he struck me as a loner who may have been isolated by others, but it became clear that he was the one who chose this. When all the other children are busily preparing plays and performances for sharing, he sometimes chooses to sit and read on his own. He gets very involved in reading detective stories, and told me that he likes to read alone (Field notes, April 6, 1993, p. 8b).

> ***Donald-*** **I prefer working by myself. . . . If I need help I can go ask Edward. . . . Even at home I like to work alone (Student interviews, May 5, 1993, p. 4).**

Donald's mom said to me that this is really the first year that he really had *gotten interested in reading. He doesn't like to put his book down, I think that is part of the problem. He's been reading a lot of these detective stories and he gets started and I think he wants to get it finished. He doesn't want to be bothered with having to put it down and to work with someone else. I like to give them choice but sometimes I don't give them choice if I feel that they need to work with others (Marlene conversation, April 8, p. 1).*

One of Donald's problems is that he always prefers to work alone. I've really been trying to encourage him to work with other people. It is much easier to do it by yourself than to accommodate other people's needs. Quite often I'll try to put him in a situation where he has to work with somebody. When we do partner reading sometimes he'll say "Do I have to go with somebody?" and sometimes I'll say he does. You can't sit and choose who you are going to work with. You don't have to like everybody as a friend, but you have to learn to get along with them so you can work with them. Just because they don't work the same as you do, doesn't mean that you can say you are not working with them. You have to learn to get along with them (Marlene conversation, April 6, p. 3). Often he will choose to do things with other people but I think it depends on the kind of activity, whether it is stimulating enough for him (Marlene conversation, April 15, p. 2).

Kristen experienced frustration when Lorna, her math partner, was slower than Randy's partner Karne. Her slowness meant that Randy and Karne got finished and off to the computer before Kristen and Lorna. Kristen didn't like this because the computers are considered by many students to be a reward for finishing their work. When she saw them going off to the computers she said to Lorna "Is Randy done? Come on. I want to get done." When Carl and Alan went to the computers, she got more agitated. "No! Please, no! They probably got the computer disk that I wanted!" (Field notes, May 6, 1993, pp. 2-2b). This story illustrates the clash between completing a certain quantity of work to meet individualistic goals and the wider cooperative-communal goal of having students experience a relationship of caring for and helping others.

> ***Kristen-*** **Well sometimes I am working on my math by myself and I want to get it finished (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 8).**

You engage them in free choice times to provide them with opportunities to work in situations that suit their friendship and learning preferences, but you make sure that they are scheduled with sufficient infrequency so as to give them the experience of working with people that will challenge their relational skills. Most choose to work in group situations-albeit friendship groups-when given the option. This is an indication of the value that they place upon socializing but also tells us that they are feeling a desire to collaborate rather than to remain individualistic. Such free choosing tells us also that a community of affinity is descriptive of the current state of community-ness of most of your students.

I guess I don't always insist that they have to work with someone because when I am doing my planning, quite often, I like to plan by myself, not with someone that the principal told me to plan with. I look at myself as a learner also and I think I have to give those kids that opportunity also. I have to look at the Donald's and know perfectly well that he would always work by himself, but I *also have to make sure that he experiences some of the other ways too. There are some that learn well that way now and there are some that don't (Marlene conversation, June 16B, p. 3).*

By partnering students you are attempting to build their tolerance for relating to others. It is particularly important for the goal-oriented individualists like Donald, yet we cannot say for sure that it helps them to relate better to the other. He is put in situations where he is forced to interact with others, but remains aloof from the vision that you hold for him as a citizen of your classroom who can be helpful, patient, and tolerant. It was interesting that you brought this up to his parents at conference time. You told them that he prefers reading on his own rather than joining others and that you saw this as an important goal for him to work on in your classroom (Field notes, June 4, 1993, p. 1).

It is interesting because Donald's dad asked him about his social relationships with others. They know that is an area that Donald needs to work in. Donald knows all the answers of why he needs to work with people. He knows it all but he would prefer not to do it. When his dad asked him what he had learned from this Donald couldn't answer. I am not satisfied with how I feel that he works with others. He is still arrogant, he still thinks that he is the smartest kid in the classroom and that there is nothing that he can learn from anybody else (Marlene conversation, June 16B, p. 4). I said to his parents that is a goal for him to work on but I am not sure that he wants to and I believe that it will create trouble for him (Marlene conversation, June 16B, p. 5).

By insisting that students like Donald try to live in community with others, you are acting upon your desire to narrow the gap between individualism and community in their lives. You want your students to get along with each other and provide support and care for one another within a classroom context which reflects individuals' desires for more private, individualistic pursuits. Despite your strong conviction that they must work in community with others, you are sensitive to their individual needs. The ways that you recognize this clash of expectations and adjust your practice shows me that you hold a deep understanding of the world of your students and pursue a sense of balance in your actions.

You have to look at an adult's point of view too. If we can't accept doing that all the time, how can we expect eight year olds to want to do that? I know I would be just like Donald if the principal said to me you have to work with someone I disagreed with philosophically to plan. So I can understand, but I also know that sometimes I have to be forced to work with other people, and the same with kids (Marlene conversation, June 16B, p. 4). They know that they get lots of opportunities in this classroom to do those kinds of things and that they are not going to miss out that much (Marlene conversation, June 16B, p. 6).

In a community and a family you are going to get the Edwards that don't want to help anybody. That seems to me to be what those faster students are wanting is to get ahead. There is that tendency to relate to that person as long as they are friendly. But when it comes to that idea of trying to work with people they have tolerance for, they choose people like Susan and Kristen because they are fairly good students and they don't get carried away (Marlene

conversation, May 5, p. 2).

I think that in some cases classrooms can be more democratic and in some cases they can't. Because I am the teacher, I have to set the standards. The groups that I made yesterday for the trip to the dinosaur exhibit weren't under negotiation. I picked these groups for a reason and that is why they stay like that. So there are times yes and there are times no, and I think it is a happy medium that you reach. It is like the laws of the country. We don't make all of them. We don't have a lot of control of some of those things. Part of those decisions are mine and part of them are theirs (Marlene conversation, June 16, p. 5).

"Living in a Small Circle"

Note to the reader: This last community conversation tells the story of Marlene's resistance to the forces of competitive-individualism and some of the ways she has strived to create an island of gemeinschaft in a sea of gesellschaft. This theme speaks of the lonely position in which Marlene finds herself as she attempts to help her students experience a gemeinschaft world when gesellschaft perspectives are pervasive throughout most of the rest of the school and system in which her classroom is situated. It is a story of quiet courage which happens because of her strongly held beliefs in community. This story was named after Marlene's talk about being on the outside of a larger circle of influence that clashed with her own values of community.

There are many forces which work against your desire to achieve community in your classroom. These forces threaten to erode community from both inside your school and outside of it. They reveal how your beliefs are often at odds with the beliefs and policies of individuals and agencies around you. These forces, whether consciously or unconsciously, threaten to influence your classroom in ways which are not part of your belief in how community should be. This story is a compelling one to me because it is one that I have also lived. I am particularly interested in how you strive to overcome these forces so your students are protected and able to flourish within your classroom.

I feel that I don't have control over these issues. My teacher friend Karla and I have often talked about how our circle of influence is so much smaller. It is Jane and Carey, but Carey doesn't say anything. At least Jane says something. The rest of them, their circle is much bigger. They have the circle and we are on the outside of the circle. I can live with that, as long as I can run my classroom the way I want to run it. It is when I start getting dictated to about what happens inside the classroom that I have to use workbooks or that kind of thing (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 9).

Your board and your provincial government both probably wish you would simply conform to central curriculum standards. You live this story every year around the time of testing but it seems to be more of a temporary annoyance than a continuous barrier. The concepts and knowledge which are demanded by centralized authorities are taught in your classroom without really compromising the learning experiences which you believe are important. You resist these centralized, non-community-oriented forces so that they do not seriously impair your desire for community.

This is illustrated by the way you integrate the concepts of past, present, and future into your key idea of tolerance, understanding and acceptance. Past, present and future are concepts which your school board placed on the grade three achievement tests. You worked them into your key idea by discussing past, present and future forms of native housing. You had explored past Plains Cree housing with them and had them consider ways to find out more about past housing. You went on to have them consider present aboriginal houses and possibilities for future forms of houses. This took place as part of the grade three social studies topic of Alberta's native people. The concepts of rural and urban were integrated into your key idea in a similar fashion. This shows how you refuse to allow your teaching to be restricted by these evaluation measures, and instead infuse these concepts into your own agenda (Field notes, May 4, 1993, pp. 4-4b).

I would love to get into a level where I don't have to have testing. All my teaching career I have been in the testing years. I can understand it that the public is demanding something for the money they are putting into education. Half of our tax money goes into education. They have that right but why do we have to have tests in year three for math and social studies? Why are they at three and six and nine? What about all those other ones? Why aren't they held *accountable? Mandy was in Millie's room but no one is going to go back and say how come she didn't meet the standard of the year three test. It is me that gets that question, so it is just an added pressure for you (Marlene conversation, May 19, p. 5).*

Despite your conviction not to be deterred by these centralized curricular expectations, you did feel you had to cover these curriculum concepts. Your usual group work process in social studies was temporarily shelved for the three weeks of April 27- May 17 to allow for you to engage in more direct teaching. You resumed your usual group process approach once you felt your students were ready for the May 25 social studies achievement test. Despite the pressure you felt to prepare your students for this testing situation, you continued to use some of your preferred teaching approaches, such as your support circle, throughout these three weeks (Field notes May 10-13, 1993).

For me as a year three teacher my kids have to write that grade three social studies test. This year they are going to have one three topic. Whereas at one and two you don't feel quite as accountable for that because you don't have that pressure of having to worry about that (Marlene conversation, April 15, p. 6).

You tend to ignore the anti-community forces whenever you can and work silently to achieve what you perceive to be best for children. This is exemplified by how you structure the achievement testing to meet the needs of some of your more academically fragile students. The way you nurtured Mandy through the language arts testing is a testament to your commitment to her as a person first and a student to be evaluated second. You put her personal well being ahead of the demands for curriculum accountability which are placed upon you. You take a professional risk by doing the testing in a way which challenges the boundaries of your role as tester. First and foremost, your concern is to have Mandy feel comfortable and safe in the testing situation. For people like Mandy who are challenged readers, these tests have the potential to take away the safe environment which you have so carefully constructed around them. You want to have her feel she can do these tests by having her read the questions out loud to you. She is also encouraged to ask questions about her answers which might reassure her she is on the right track. You did not tell her any answers, but you were always there for her, making sure she did not feel frustrated with the task. You refused to let outside testing demands destroy her confidence in the tasks which were to be performed in your classroom (Field notes May 25, 1993, p. 2).

Mandy can read that test but she just needs to be encouraged the whole time. " Now read that. What does that ask? Now write that down." You need to talk to her about that as it is going on. She needs the confidence. I could have just said to her "no, go there and do it by yourself," but she wouldn't have done anything. I wasn't telling her the answers, I was just having her verbalize before she did it. If I would have felt that she couldn't do it, then I would have let her go through the thing, but I felt she could do it if she had support with it (Marlene conversation, June 16, p.1).

Another aspect of the forces working against community in your classroom exists within the walls of the school. Teachers who hold different beliefs about how, what, and why children should learn often influence school-based decisions in a way which threatens to erode what you believe is important about community. When teachers on your staff voted in favor of cancelling the last week of multi-age dinosaur activities, for instance, it was clear to you that this was a teacher-centered decision rather than a child-centered one. The children hadn't experienced all of the activities and many were very disappointed when we had to tell them about the cancellation. It was amazing to me how you and two other staff members were the only staff who voted to continue the activities, despite the fun and learning which we knew the children were experiencing (Field notes, May 13, 1993, p. 1). The comments from your students showed they were very much in favor of these activities and saw the benefits of these activities for building relationships with others. "I have fun and learn other things," said James. We "teach the kindergarten's things they don't know and we feel good about it," said Marvin. "You get to meet new people and work together," said Cheryl. "You can make new friends, and what about getting to know different teachers," said Alan (Field notes, May 5, 1993, p. 3). I wonder how many other teachers de-briefed these experiences from a socio-emotional perspective, or if these considerations were on their mind when they voted to cancel the last week of sessions.

The cancelling of the dinosaurs was a teacher-centered decision instead of a child-centered decision. Everything I look at is how I can make it better for my kids and what is good for them (Marlene conversation, May 19, p. 6).

The report card issue which came up in your school is another in-school example of how forces are continually making it difficult for you to maintain the kind of classroom that you desire. At the staff professional development session which was held to review the school report card format, the sub-group whom you were working with were pushing for a report card that slotted children into categories of below, at, or above expectations (Field notes, May 19, 1993, pp. 1-1b).

They make comments about why they need to have a checklist on social-emotional and then I say why I don't need one, and how it goes against my philosophy. I give them the example of whether they work better for someone that is positive, or someone that gives them negative comments. They said, "Oh I can see that, but, parents need to know". I said "Parents don't need to know more." I said ,"Do you want to hear that your child talks all the time in school, or do you want to hear what we are trying to do to make your child fit into the classroom and into the social group, so that they can get along with everyone in the classroom?" (Marlene conversation, May 19, p. 6). I am not writing negative report cards. I'll find a way of doing it so that it won't be negative (Marlene conversation, May 27, p. 9).

Evaluation can be done in ways that reflect very different perspectives about community and the teachers in your sub-group do not share your belief in what classrooms should be. Their preferred form of report card evaluation would mean children could receive negative comments about their work which would be in direct opposition to how you go about building confidence in your classroom community. You work so hard to develop a warm and open climate for learning and resent and resist this form of negative intrusion upon your actions to build a caring community. These teacher colleagues of yours have a very different notion about what is important in classrooms, which means you are continually on guard in staff meetings to ensure your caring community is not eroded.

I think we have come so far in educating the parents in this community that three-quarters of them I would say are very happy with not having marks. I never have questions about that. Maybe the five-sixes do, but then I feel they haven't done a good enough job of selling it (Marlene conversation, May 11, p. 3).

I am opposed to marks. Arlene from another class who rides to school with me did a report on Natives. She is really annoyed. She got 75 on it . She says "Ms. G. that is the best I can do and that is all I got." What does that tell you? How motivating is that? What is she going to do next time? What does 75 mean? I can give a test that my best student can fail or I can give a test that my best student can do well on. What does it prove? My 75 might be your 90. When you look at kids, how can you say in the next statement that you think kids are unique and special? If I think Cheryl is unique then why do I have to give her a D compared to Edward? You can't! When I look at where she started and where she is now, she has grown as much as Edward has. That to me is very very important (Marlene conversation, May 11, p. 3).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have shared community conversations which tell stories of some of the elements of gesellschaft which were evident in Marlene's classroom. "Responsibility for Community" is a story about the individual responsibility which Marlene insisted her students learn, and the tensions which this holds for living in community with others. "Living in the Outer Circle" is a story about the students who resisted community or found themselves excluded from it. "Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance" is a story about the tensions which emerged as Marlene attempted to meet the needs of her students for individuality at the same time that she also strived to have them be supportive and accepting of one another. "Living in a Small Circle" is a story about the forces of competitive-individualism which were continually seeping into Marlene's classroom community through social and bureaucratic structures in the school and province and the lonely position which she found herself in as a result of this. These stories of gesellschaft speak to the importance of seeing the communitarian classroom as a place which acknowledges and makes space for gesellschaft forces. The next chapter further explores the elements of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft which existed in Marlene's classroom. This is done to show more clearly how Marlene made space for both gemeinschaft and gesellschaft through her personal practical knowledge.

CHAPTER VII

COMMUNITY RECONSIDERED: GEMEINSCHAFT AND GESELLSCHAFT

Introduction

How is this classroom a community? This is the question which has been central to my doctoral inquiry and has led me to live amongst Marlene and her students as they engaged in the teaching-learning process. It is a question which has drawn me to follow my nose first here and then there, as students sometimes collaborated and sometimes clashed, as they worked together and alone, as they shared and supported one another and as they shunned and isolated one another. It is a question which has led Marlene and her students to tell stories which reveal their hopes and dreams and their frustrations and dislikes about living in community with one another. And so I have re-presented these stories in hopes of shedding some light on how this classroom is a community. Although I feel these stories stand on their own as a testament to the complexity and wonders of Marlene's classroom community, I am also drawn back to the literature on community and my burning question of what this all means for citizenship education, or education for social life (Noddings,1992), as I have come to call it.

Therefore, in this chapter, I will reflectively turn (Schon, 1991) on these stories in an attempt to have them speak back to the literature on community. I will attempt to conceptualize Marlene's classroom according to the gemeinschaft and gesellschaft forces which exist there, and will use communitarian and liberal political notions as a way to assist me in organizing how I perceive Marlene and her students to have lived in the tensionality between these differing notions. This is done in order to help understand the implicit aspects of communitarianism and liberalism which are expressed through Marlene's practice, and to show the impact which her personal practical knowledge has upon how she educates her students for social life.

The stories which I have come up with here are how I see Marlene's personal practical knowledge being expressed and the tacit elements of communitarianism and liberalism which her practice seems to express to me. I acknowledge that they are only one way in which her classroom can be seen, and I believe there are many other possible ways to represent her practice. But this is how I saw her classroom as a community, and this perspective seems inseparably linked to my life-history and world-view, and represents reflections on the reading that I have done and the experiences that I have had with community. It is my humble attempt to represent her stories and actions and those of her students in a way that sheds a different light upon the notion of the communitarian/gemeinschaft-liberal/gesellschaft tensionality which exists in classrooms.

Marlene's classroom can be seen as a gemeinschaft of place where certain tendencies toward community seem to manifest themselves. Although her practice seems to be more embodied and tacit than voiced and explicit, and more emotional, affective, and relational than logical and rational, there are four very significant stories about community that seem to me to be given expression through her practice. The first story is a story of community as a place which exists for the common good of its members. The second story is a story of community as a place which is striving for equality. The third story is a story of community as a place of generosity, caring and otherness. The fourth story is a story of community as a place where self is enhanced.

At the same time that these communitarian-gemeinschaft aspects found expression in Marlene's classroom, the forces of liberalism-gesellschaft were also vying for space. The result of this gemeinschaft-gesellschaft mixture is a community with many narrative threads and many tensions. It is a community in which students learn to take responsibility for one another and to see the benefits of caring, generosity and otherness, yet it is also a place where pockets of the less desirable elements of individualism and affinity remain strong. It is a place in which equality in community, an enhanced sense of self, a disposition of generosity and the common good existed alongside a community where individual choice was necessary to preserve liberty. Marlene's continuous reflection about the best decisions to suit the particular and immediate needs of her students for more gemeinschaft or gesellschaft forms a central part of her communitarian classroom story. After sharing the four stories about how Marlene's classroom was a community, I will proceed to share some of the many ways which Marlene seemed to live in the tension of these competing stories.

Classroom as Community

Community as a Place for the Common Good

Notions of the common good seem to have been at the heart of Marlene's classroom community. Marlene seemed determined that children learn a sense of responsibility for their classmates. She stressed actions which were communally beneficial and affected the whole group, which served as a way to impart a sense of we-ness. The common good means that "members share a set of beliefs and values; . . . the interest and identity of each member intimately depends on and forms that of the whole; and members demonstrate solidarity with one another" (Daly, 1994, p. xv). The common good is the antithesis of liberalism and individualism and reflects Hegel's sense of "the I that is we, the we that is I" (1807/1977, p. 110).

Students were involved in major decisions that affected their life in the community. Marlene made sure, for instance, that all children publicly participated in the construction of the classroom creed which became a central guiding feature for their relationships with others (**A Caring Community**). This meant that students were invited to construct a vision for the common good. Students were encouraged to feel that they were unique and had "a safe place to come and learn in" (**Children's Literature as Relational Community**). It was a place which was open to hearing their voices (**Giving Children Voice**).

Children learned this sense of we-ness through the way that classmates supported their attempts at sharing and risking in the classroom. Public support was evident when Sasha chose to read The Two of Us (Aliki, 1979), a book which Marlene and I saw as resonating with Sasha's personal experiences. When Sasha read this book to her classmates, they confirmed her place in this classroom by the responses which they made in support of her reading (**Children's Literature as Relational Community**).

There were many other instances in which supportiveness was given for risking and sharing, such as during Tell and Guess (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**), during partner reading (**Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community**), and during support circles (**Sharing Dark Mountains**). Children were comfortable in sharing such things as their baby artifacts with their classmates, and Marvin talked about how public sharing felt more comfortable than "keeping our work to ourselves" (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**). Marlene felt it important that children learned to feel it is okay to "come here and make mistakes" (**Sharing Dark Mountains**) by doing activities such as performing plays for their classmates (**Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community**). This supportiveness which Marlene nurtured through her actions and expectations represents a way that students learned the importance of specific shared values which confirmed the identity of the individual as an integral part of the community. Students learned that public courtesy through active listening and positive affirming comments about each others' work was a value that was commonly expected. Shared values such as these showed children the importance of this sense of solidarity and this notion of collective support seemed always to be present.

Marlene's desire for a sense of social solidarity was also evident in the way she talked to the children. When she saw children doing things that were potentially beneficial for all students to hear, she made them public. This was made clear by the way she shared the positive things which children were doing with the whole class so that they could be publicly affirmed for their accomplishments. This was also manifested in the way she invited children to share their home culture with the class so that they could be told that it was of value (**Bringing all Children into the Community**). Marlene expressed her sense of caring through community supportiveness by encouraging children to express their care through public talk and action. This sense of caring was made public by the open concern which Marlene expressed for Lana after she hurt herself, (**A Caring Community**) and for Marvin and Susan who were newer members of the class (**Giving Children Voice**). Children were also invited to hear Marlene's talk about caring for people as individuals with many different strengths (**Living in the Outer Circle**) and to involve themselves in working to more fully invite children into the circle **(Giving Children Voice**). Children also were encouraged to take action in support of one another, such as the time Melinda volunteered to act in a caring way towards Mandy by playing with her when Marlene raised her friendship need to the larger community (**Bringing all Children into the Circle**). Communal caring was also expressed in Marlene's teaching of children to celebrate the work of the other by supporting one another with public comments about their writing, reading and performing in the cozy corner. It was a part of the caring action which Marlene tried to encourage by publicly acknowledging and praising the accomplishments of her students (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**). The public talk which Marlene engaged in with her students about social solidarity represents another way that she embodied an emphasis upon the common good in her practice.

When Marlene attempted to settle playground disputes in the cozy corner, she engaged the children in common talk to have them consider ideas that might represent a solution to problems in such a way that all of the members of her community could benefit. Students were expected to publicly participate in problem solving as conflicts emerged. For instance, Lana knew that it was a norm to "keep on talking until the problem is solved," and Marlene held students accountable for "expressing an opinion" when solving playground issues and other community related conflicts (**Giving Children Voice**). This was a struggle because students often wanted to come up with more individualistic solutions by laying blame upon specific individuals. Marlene would have none of this form of action as she tried to maintain a sense of group solidarity by refusing to listen to the individual accusations which children wanted to make, insisting instead upon the solution rather than the specific cause. This was part of her conviction that children need to discuss matters together when they affect the cohesiveness of the group because they are "affecting all of us." Children like Edward recognized that the cozy corner was a place for the discussion of these matters, a place where "we share ideas and we help each other" (**Giving Children Voice**). Linda also recognized that as a member of the classroom community she had a role in helping her classmates sort out differences which threatened group harmony. She helped Melinda see the hurt she was causing Laura so that their relationship could become harmonious once again (**Living in the Outer Circle**). These classroom actions which Marlene tacitly carried out served to provide students with a sense of the importance of the common good, although she did not articulate this as an overt goal in her practice.

Marlene also was promoting the common good through her expectation that all children see themselves as having a place of value in her community and that they understand their responsibility to contribute to the general well-being of the community as a whole. Her refusal to remove children from the class who were being disruptive was an expression of her belief to not "segregate kids from the group." She felt strongly that this course of action was "excluding them, not only through her eyes but through everybody's eyes in this classroom" (**Bringing All Children into the Circle**). Part of Marlene's notion of community seemed to be related to making all children feel both responsible to and a sense of belonging for, membership in the community so that "people don't feel left out" (**Sharing Dark Mountains**). This was partly evident in Marlene's expectation that children not be excluded from the classroom for their actions. The children knew that they were obligated to work with disruptive children like Sasha from where they were, to try to have them see ways to work together, and not to exclude them for their differences (**Living in the Outer Circle**).

A sense of the common good may also have been part of Marlene's desire to have students physically take care of their classroom and to recognize that "we all own this classroom, not just me." Other roles, such as being responsible for the classroom recess equipment seemed to be oriented towards helping students see these possessions as common property for which they were all responsible (**Responsibility for Community**). This taught the children that the use of these goods was connected to a common ownership which meant that they had to consider the feelings and needs of their classmates as they cared for these possessions.

A desire for the common good also seemed to be expressed through Marlene's insistence that her students engage more frequently in activities which would benefit their overall academic growth as a community of students. She preferred to have children engage in activities such as response writing rather than free writing, so that all children would have the chance to develop expressive creativity rather than the few who might if it was left to occur in free choice writing alone (**Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance**). It was a community expectation that students share answers with each other in a public way during math so that all could benefit from their answers (**Bringing all Children into the Circle**). The heavy emphasis upon classroom activities which were publicly experienced and socially constructed reflects a view of learning as public, communal and interdependent. This reflects also a classroom environment which was focused upon a common shared experience so that things that are learned become public knowledge that can potentially be for the common good of all members of the community. An emphasis upon the common good meant that association with fellow classmates contributed to a sense of seeing classroom actions as benefitting the good of all, rather than the good of the individual. This community was a place where the needs and problems of the individual often became public communal concerns.

Community as a Place for Equality

Marlene told many stories which seem to suggest her strong concern for creating a sense of equality in her classroom. This was evident in her expression of caring for those students who are the least capable of achieving academically and socially in her classroom. This sense of obligation to the other (Sandel, 1982/1994) can be seen as a desire to treat students in such a way that they have equal access to the goods of community, despite their differing talents (Rawls, 1971). Marlene knew that students like Cheryl worked just as hard and grew just as much as students like Edward, who had more talents, and she saw this as central to her notion of community (**Living in a Small Circle**).

Equality was continually expressed in Marlene's talk about her students. To Marlene, "education is for everybody, not just the elite" (**All of us are Teachers**), and this is why she was against homogenious grouping. She talked of having a soft spot for those who are "really in need" in her classroom (**A Caring Community**), and explained how she worked to have them feel a sense of belonging and acceptance. She thought it was important that all children "have a voice" (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**) in her classroom and she established classroom activities which would promote this opportunity. She was opposed to assigning marks to students, as they served as a way to show inequalities which she preferred to downplay (**Living in a Small Circle**). She identified students with specific academic and social needs, such as Linda, who especially benefitted from being guided and supported by students with different talents (**All are Teachers**). She promoted a climate where "everyone is able to share the same as everyone" (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**), and aimed to "try to help organize those who aren't as organized as the rest of them" (**Responsibility for Community**).

An emphasis upon program features which provided the less talented with access or told them that they had the right to this access seemed evident in many features of Marlene's classroom. Her story about the horrible way less fortunate students were taught math facts during her own schooling (**A Caring Community**) and her conviction that her students could "all learn facts" with the appropriate method and perseverance (**Responsibility for Community**) were examples of how she supported the less talented. This support was also expressed through her discussion and use of children's literature. She used books such as The Important Book (Brown, 1949), which promoted a sense of individual uniqueness, Crow Boy (Yashima, 1983), which celebrated people's special gifts, Koala Lou (Fox, 1989), which valued children for who they were and didn't compare them to others, and The Rag Coat (Mills, 1991), which honored the less fortunate (**Children's Literature as Relational Community**). The common practice of pairing stronger students with weaker ones during math group work when a new skill or a hard concept was introduced was another aspect of Marlene's practice which seemed to promote opportunities for the less talented (**Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance**). Opportunities for students to receive support for their efforts were woven through her classroom so that she could really "value what people have to say" (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**).

In an attempt to provide less talented students with equal access to the rewards of community, Marlene promoted a sense of general duty (Rawls, 1971) for the other. This general duty was an obligation on the part of those with more academic and social endowments to help those with less endowments, regardless of who they were. Several classroom routines where this was common exemplify this general obligation.

The public support which students received in the cozy corner shows one of the ways a sense of general obligation appeared to have been promoted in Marlene's class. This support was offered as both a way to improve their academic work, as is evident in comments to Lorna and Susan, and to show a general caring for each other, as is revealed in the emotional encouragement provided to James (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**). Marlene expected children to help their classmates who were left out when they engaged in partner reading activities (**Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community**), and the students knew they were expected to carry this general obligation over onto the playground (**Bringing all Children into the Circle**). Marlene reminded the students of this obligation to help those who were in need when she praised those students who had been helping Marvin (**Giving Children Voice**). The mandatory partnership arrangements in math, and the rule of always helping others when they needed help during math also expresses this sense of general obligation which Marlene wanted her students to honor (**Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance**). She emphasized to her students that this role as helpers/teachers/supporters was to be extended to all, not just their friends (**Living in the Outer Circle**), and made sure they had an opportunity to work with all of their classmates throughout the course of the year (**All of us are Teachers**). This general obligation was likely part of the reason for the buddy reading service which she had her students provide for the students in Jane's class (**Service in the Larger Community**).

Marlene's personal practical knowledge seemed to show that she wished her students to feel a general obligation to help those who are less talented than they were at specific activities. It can be said with certainty that the children with the least academic and emotional advantages in this class fared better as far as support in their academic work than they would without this community. This was because it was not one's natural endowments which were stressed in her classroom, but rather, a collective sense of equality toward which all were expected to contribute. Communities cannot be places of equality as long as there are hierarchies that hold some peoples' contributions in a more valuable light than others. It would appear that this notion of equality was one feature of community which was given expression through Marlene's personal practical knowledge.

Community as a Place for Generosity, Caring, and Otherness

Marlene's stories, both lived and told, show her sense of caring, self-transcendence, generosity and otherness. Through her practice, Marlene embodied these dispositions and this provided her students with an opportunity to see and experience the moral benefits of this way of relating to one another. For Noddings (1984), caring means "to receive and be received, to care and be cared-for. . . as we are meeting the other in genuine encounters of caring and being cared for" (pp. 173; 175). Self-transcendence (Oliner, 1983) and generosity (Bricker, 1989) mean that we act towards the other because it feels morally right to do so, and we do so without an expectation of reward. Otherness (Friedman, 1983) means that people in a group care about the others for their uniqueness. "It is only in uniqueness that there is real mutuality, presentness, and presence. Dialogue means a mutual sharing in reciprocal presentness of the unique. The unique implies otherness but otherness capable of entering into communion." (p. 12). This sense of caring, as expressed here through the works of these authors, is closely linked to the notion of natural will which Tonnies (1887/1957) sees as a central feature to the gemeinschaft world. Natural will is foundational to understanding a truly harmonious community because it points to the importance of relationships or associations as valuable in and of themselves, independent of the ends to which they may lead. It is this sense of natural willingness to associate with the other as a part of a normal way of life without the expectation of reward, rather than as a means to an end that is the central feature of gemeinschaft.

Marlene's caring was expressed in many aspects of her practice. One very noticeable way was through the physical contact which she made with children by hugging them, such as when she hugged Mandy, Carl and others (**A Caring Community**). Her caring also came through in the way she made talk about personal matters a priority in her busy and demanding day, how she became emotional when things made her feel sad, and how she talked about the central importance of love and caring to her practice (**A Caring Community**). This sense of caring was embodied in the way she organized her caring circle to show children they had a "right to be cared for by their classmates" and a responsibility to care for them in return (**Bringing all Children into the Circle**). Her desire to promote a disposition of caring was also noticeable by the way she attempted to help the children to understand that their actions were often hurtful to others and that they must try to be more aware of others' feelings and to care for each other like members of a family (**Giving Children Voice**). A community of otherness cannot exist without this sense of caring.

Marlene probably engendered a sense of generosity or self-transcendence in students by the way she organized her classroom activities so that collaboration was encouraged. Partner reading, math partnerships, peer editing, social studies groups, and buddy reading were collaborative endeavors in which a space for generosity was made possible because they were learning activities which were socially experienced. A sense of generosity was very evident in the way Tanya and Susan invited Susan to join them in their partner reading play when she first came to the class (**Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community**), and the way Carl and Art invited Marvin and Karne to be part of their play (**Sharing Dark Mountains**). Tanya and Susan's mutual support for one another during peer editing, and Edward, Art and Lorna's academic help, support and encouragement for Karne during social studies group work are two other examples of how a space was made for generosity in Marlene's classroom (**All are Teachers**). Conditions for nurturing generosity were also made possible by the group arrangements which Marlene and Jane encouraged during buddy reading by pairing students from each other's classes and asking them to help each other by listening, prompting and encouraging (**Service in the Larger Community**). Generosity was also noticeable when children were not required to work collaboratively, such as when Marlene gave the students the option to work alone during math, and many continued to consult with one another (**All of us are Teachers**). Tanya claimed that collaborative activities helped her to be more caring and helpful (**Service in the Larger Community**). Yet as we know from the stories of gesellschaft, generosity was not always evident in childrens' actions.

Despite the forces of gesellschaft which were constantly working against gemeinschaft, Marlene's teaching continually modelled a sense of otherness. This made it possible for her students to see what it looked like, although this was not necessarily verbalized as a value by Marlene. But Marlene's tacit desire for a sense of otherness was made clear to me by the way she listened to her students and showed them how to listen appropriately to others, how she taught them how to respond in an inviting way to people who were listening to them, how she encouraged them to learn to work with and accept people who were different from them, and in the way she modelled how to treat others with respect and thus taught them a leadership of otherness.

Marlene was a model of being there for the other in the way she listened to what the children had to say. Issues which were of personal concern to them also became her concern, as she showed her care for their worries, thoughts and concerns (**A Caring Community**; **Sharing Dark Mountains**). The students knew that listening to what each other had to say was valued and they were often openly appreciative when others listened to their sharing. Donald, for instance, expressed his comfortableness with the way that his classmates listened to his report (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**). Marlene shared her vision for appropriate responses to others in the cozy corner circle when they were readying to share their Tell and Guess by showing them how to thank each other for watching and listening. This served as acknowledgement to their peers that they appreciated each others' decision to listen to what they had to say **(Weaving a Supportive Fabric**).

Encouraging the students to value working with people who may be different from them was another aspect of otherness which was part of Marlene's personal practical knowledge. Marlene felt that providing students with the opportunity to work with various people in collaborative groupings in partner reading helped them "to understand their point of view, even though they might not do that themselves" (**Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community**). Buddy reading also gave her students the chance "to learn to understand and accept" students who had special academic and emotional needs (**Service in the Larger Community**). Despite the frustration which some students felt when they had to partner up with more academically challenged students in math, Marlene felt it was important to have them move beyond their preferred partners because "you have to get to know and understand them before you can get acceptance" (**Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance**).

Marlene sometimes tacitly and sometimes explicitly modelled how to treat others with respect in various learning contexts. This was embodied tacitly in the way she tried to role model for Sasha how to treat other children by demonstrating a loving relationship towards her (**Living in the Outer Circle**). She overtly modelled appropriate body language and polite talk which students could consider so they would be aware of their responsibilities towards their classmates during social studies group work (**All of us are Teachers**). These models of ways to treat each other with respect served as examples that taught a leadership of otherness. To Marlene, leadership meant that students were willing to not always be in control and to not always insist that they get their own way, but instead to learn to step back and be willing to "do what [they] want to do today" (**Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community**).

Many children did experience this sense of otherness. Tanya saw her classroom as a place in which everyone was "generous and nice" and Marvin appreciated that he sometimes didn't even need to ask others for help, because they would give it unselfishly (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**). Cheryl felt her classmates were people who shared, and Marvin felt that working with others was better because it prevented loneliness (**Bringing all Children into the Circle**). Susan, Lana and Laura all talked about the sense of trust which they felt for their classmates (**Sharing Dark Mountains**), and Mandy and Cheryl expressed feeling at ease with trusting everyone with their personal belongings (**Responsibility for Community**). An emotional safety was talked about by Tanya when she told how she knew her fellow students wouldn't laugh at her when she shared, (**Sharing Dark Mountains**), and by Kristen when she told of her confidence that her classmates wouldn't make fun of her work (**Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community**). Tanya and Susan were also proud to be able to help others, and Kristen, although acknowledging the hardship of helping those with difficulties, was willing to do so (**Service in the Larger Community**). Terry also recognized his and others' roles in helping those in trouble (**All of us are Teachers**).

Community as a Place which Enhances Self

Another central feature of Marlene's classroom was the influence which community membership had upon the self-development of individuals who dwelt there. Much of the liberal critique of communitarianism has been centered around the concern that an over-emphasis upon the common good results in an annihilation of individual autonomy and liberty, key elements of liberal political philosophy (Kukathas and Pettit, 1990), yet this was not necessarily true in Marlene's classroom. Membership in Marlene's classroom appeared to enhance the individual character of many children, which in turn created possibilities for enhanced autonomy. It could be argued that autonomy was achieved at the expense of liberty, since children were often asked to help others with their work rather than always working alone. This temporary denial of freedom of choice was justified as leading towards an enhanced sense of the individual because of its benefit of creating a more sociable person through social interaction. This sense of becoming whole only through relationship with the other is the heart of Buber's ontology of the between in which a person "can become whole not in virtue of a relation to himself [or herself] but only in virtue of a relation to another self" (cited in Friedman, 1983, p. 4). Membership in Marlene's classroom community resulted in opportunities for the enhancement of personal identity, the improvement of individual confidence, the development of bravery, and an awakening to a sense of personal power.

Individual identity was indirectly nurtured in Marlene's class by the way her actions enabled every child to see themselves as "unique and special" (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**). This is expressed through her attempt to care for them as individuals by listening to what they had to say, and by taking an interest in their personal lives (**A Caring Community**). Terry's discussion of how Marlene used The Important Book (Brown, 1949) to help students see that they are all unique and "do things their own way" is an example of how her classroom practices promote the expression of their own identity (**Children's Literature as Relational Community**). Marlene made space for children which allowed them to express their individual uniqueness when she encouraged them to share the events and artifacts associated with their own birth and babyhood as part of a classroom project (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**). This space was also made when she encouraged the sharing and discussion of aspects of their ethnic culture (**Bringing all Children into the Circle**). These examples show some of the opportunities which students had to experience an enhancement of their personal identities in this classroom context. Yet these events would not have been possible in a classroom context that served to make sharing risky. In Marlene's classroom, children knew that their voices would not only be heard (**Giving Children Voice**), but their actions were verbally supported by both students and their teacher (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric; Sharing Dark Mountains**).

Marlene also succeeded in making room for the expression of children's self confidence through the activities she planned. Some self-confidence was likely necessary before children would share their baby artifacts or their home culture, but it is also likely that this sharing contributed to a stronger sense of self confidence. Children's sharing was strongly supported by the community, which made it a more comfortable environment in which to share. Opportunities were made possible for developing children's self confidence when they were supported in sharing their thoughts and fears to one another in the support circle, when they were encouraged to volunteer answers during math de-briefs in the cozy corner, and when they were encouraged to work in groups during patner reading to prepare plays (**Sharing Dark Mountains**). The personal support which Marlene provided to Lorna made a space for her to speak back to Edward and Art when they were teasing her. It may be that she would not have done so if this space was not provided (**Bringing all Children into the Community**). Karne received community support from his group mates and was encouraged to take part in the group social studies activity, despite the academic challenges which he faced. Again, it is doubtful that he would have done so if support was not encouraged (**All of us are Teachers**).

Community activities also served as a way to help children feel brave about doing things which they previously may have been too terrified to contemplate. Marlene saw membership in her community as directly related to the promotion of "courage and confidence," with the development of confidence as a first step towards the creation of courage (**Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community**). Susan talked about how sharing within her own classroom, where she was supported by her classmates, gradually made it easier to share in front of the whole school, because "there is a classroom up there to support you" (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**). This sense of bravery was echoed by Tanya and Kristen when they discussed the merits of having their classmates behind them during sharing as a step towards sharing at assembly (**Sharing Dark Mountains**). Marlene also saw courage as a central part of buddy reading since children had to "push themselves a little bit" (**Service in the Larger Community**).

A sense of personal power was an intention which Marlene tried to make possible through membership in her classroom community. She saw activities like peer editing and publishing as activities which gave her students "a little bit of power over what they are doing" (**All of us are Teachers**). Personal power was also made possible through the independence which children were able to exhibit during Tell and Guess as they designed word riddles which their classmates were to guess (**All of us are Teachers**), through the creativity which was possible in partner reading (**Partner Reading and the Socialness of Community**), and during independent science and social studies projects which gave students some freedom over the direction of their academic learning (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**).

Membership in Marlene's community provided the opportunity for the individual's sense of self to be enhanced, but this happened because of, not in spite of, community. As students interacted with the other they found that their own sense of being had room to change and grow as they were socially supported to be uniquely themselves. It was through the relationship of "the between" (Friedman, 1983) that self was firmly constituted, as individuals communicated their feelings, negotiated their social roles, and enacted their caring with the other in mind. Without this sociality, and the constant expectation that they relate more responsibly and caringly to others in community, the "me" would remain separate from the moral dimension of the other. Yet through sociality in community, the "me" existed through and because of a caring for the "we". Marlene's classroom community was thus related to the creation of individual character, which in turn made it possible for the development of childrens' personal autonomy and power.

The Competing Tensions of Classroom Community

Gemeinschaft never occurs in its pure form because there are always competing tensions at work in any social relationship (Tonnies, 1887/1957). The rational will of gesellschaft was constantly creeping into Marlene's classroom, although she was continually striving to create a place where a more natural communitarian will could flourish. The aspects of gesellschaft which were most in evidence were individualism and an over-emphasis upon affinity. Individualism was evident amongst students and also was noticeable in forces beyond the classroom. Affinity was part of the will which was motivating many individuals to associate in Marlene's classroom and it was sometimes accompanied by a tendency towards intolerance.

Gesellschaft as Individualism

Individualistic behavior was part of the intention behind the actions of many children in Marlene's classroom. It was evident when children showed a preference for working alone and when they exhibited a tendency to not want to help each other with academic problems. Beyer and Wood (1985) see egocentric individualism as the unwanted by-product of the liberal quest for autonomy and liberty. Tonnies would describe this as rational will, "because those involved wish to attain through it a definite end and are willing to join hands for this purpose" (Loomis & McKinney, 1957, p. 5). Taylor (1985/1994) tells us that individualism may be one of the aspects of the "march through modernity into the post-modern danger zone of hypertrophy" (p. 57). In this state of affairs, modern freedom is undermined by the destruction of loyalities and allegiances to the wider community, loyalties upon which society depends for survival. Although this severe degree of individualism was not evident in most students, it certainly appeared to be the direction in which some were leaning.

Generally, the students who appeared to be most individualistic in their orientation were those who could do their academic work with less help from their peers. The more talented students seemed to be the ones who experienced the most frustration with helping others. Edward and Donald both tended to see their role of helper of the other as more of an obligation than an act of generosity. As two of the strongest year four math students, they did not enjoy being asked to help those who were not independent math students. Edward and Donald made it clear that there were some people who they did not want to work with because of their lack of ability to finish their math in good time. Edward liked working alone because "it is much faster." Donald did not mind working with others if he didn't have to wait up for them, but if this was the case, he would sooner do it by himself. Part of their dislike of helping others was related to the worry that working with a partner would slow them down to such a degree that they might have to take their work home to finish it. Another element of individualism seemed to exist for faster working students because they saw the possibility of classroom rewards being less accessible if they had to prop up a weaker student. This seemed to be the reason for Kristen's frustration when working with Lorna. Since she had to work more slowly, she was prevented from getting first choice of the computer program after they finished their math. This desire to get work finished quickly often took precedence over concerns for the other. Students like Carl and Donald took their frustrations with being asked to support their fellow students out on them by verbalizing their frustrations. Terry resisted more silently by simply changing Melinda's mistakes and not helping her see the correct strategies involved (**Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance**). These students seemed unable to separate the means (collaborative group experiences) from the ends (academic task completion) and appeared unable to see the task of working together as a positive way of being in the world for its own sake.

Sasha was exhibiting individualism when she flitted from group to group during partner reading, trying to get things to be her own way (**Partner Reading and the Socialness of Community**). She was being individualistic and "me" centered when she tried to control the actions of her friends (**Living Outside the Circle**). Individualism was evident in Art and Alan's preference for reading by themselves during buddy reading and Edward's dominance over his partner during buddy reading. It was also evident in Mandy's desire to have physical education class without having to share space with the children from Jane's class (**Service and Otherness in the Larger Community**). Yet this did not stop Marlene from providing these children with opportunities to live more responsibly in community with others.

The forces of gesellschaft also entered the classroom by way of bureaucratic invasion, and through the not so hidden culture of the school. Board mandated achievement testing and provincially mandated standardized tests both had an impact upon the degree to which community could flourish in Marlene's classroom. The days on which testing actually took place created a false sense of individualism as students sat huddled uncharacteristically in their own spaces, jotting down answers for an unknown audience whilst the usual collaborative activities were temporarily shelved. The individualistic values of colleagues also seemed to have a subtle impact upon community by influencing school activities. The early cancellation of school-wide themes which brought children together from many classrooms and the looming threat of negatively oriented school reporting were two examples of more individualistic forces in the wider school context (**Living in a Small Circle**).

Gesellschaft as Affinity

Another aspect of gesellschaft which seemed to exist amongst some children in Marlene's classroom was a tendency to prefer to choose to associate with students with whom they had a natural affinity and with whom they could achieve a definite end. Friedman (1983) says that affinity "is based on what people feel they have in common--race, sex, religion, nationality, politics, a common formula, a common creed" (p. 135). There seemed to be an inclination amongst some students in Marlene's classroom to shun those different than them as being not desirable as friends or work-mates because they had no affinity with them. This was true when the lack of affinity prevented them from achieving their academic task, but this also held true when there were simple differences between individuals. This preference for affinity became clear in numerous instances.

Most students had preferences about who they worked with when given the choice, and this was largely related to the possibilities for task completion. Randy, Arnold and Edward's frequent decision to sit together and collaborate in math when Marlene didn't require them to work with partners shows their cooperation through affinity, but reveals also their reluctance to reach out to others who were not like-minded friends. This affinity for those who are like them was partly related to a desire to only work with those who were as academically talented as them, as Donald and Edward expressed about math partners (**Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance**). Art and Lorna also mentioned that they preferred to work with friends, although this did not appear to be related to task completion (**Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community**). Lorna commented that she preferred to work with friends because they accepted her and didn't yell (**Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance**).

A focus upon affinity in its mild forms may be positive, but an over-reliance upon relationships built upon affinity can also lead to intolerance of difference. Marvin experienced exclusion when he was not invited to be part of the friendship circle which was carried on by many of the boys. Randy and Edward said that they didn't like him, but neither could say why this was. This exclusion was greatly exacerbated when children collectively teased him to the point of tears during lunch one day (**Living in the Outer Circle**). Although this was a rare instance in Marlene's classroom, it is a reminder of the dangers of building community around affinity and ignoring the need to embrace difference in the other.

Living Amidst the Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft Tension

Marlene was far from oblivious to the will of gesellschaft that was around her, and knew that she must balance her vision for gemeinschaft with the competing intentions of some children for a gesellschaft of affinity and individualism. This did not mean that she abandoned her goal for a gemeinschaft classroom, but it did mean that she allowed aspects of gesellschaft to be part of her practice. She seemed to recognize the needs of specific individuals for more autonomy or more otherness. She did this by keeping a broad focus upon her communitarian aspirations as she also cared for them as unique individuals who had a right to have their needs for gesellschaft acknowledged. This was expressed by the way she provided activities each day which gave her students the comfort of affinity or individualism at the same time that she called upon her students to go beyond their preferred communities by entering into community relationships which demanded more emphasis upon the common good, interpersonal equality, otherness and an enhanced sense of self.

Marlene's personal practical knowledge was saturated with a gemeinschaft narrative knowing which was embodied in both the formal and hidden curriculum of her classroom. This meant that language arts, health and social studies were filled with formal content which reflected a gemeinschaft orientation. This formal curriculum was complemented with a positive hidden curriculum which promoted a sense of the common good, interpersonal equality, generosity, and an enhanced sense of self.

This gemeinschaft curriculum was continually brought into the open by Marlene's talk and was embodied in her actions in the classroom. Otherness was publicly acknowledged and rewarded by Marlene when James responded to Linda by attending intently to what she had to say in Tell and Guess. Marlene also made sure to praise Sasha for her divergent thinking and to bring out "positive aspects of what is happening in the classroom" (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**). Marlene was continually embodying the common good in her practice by making sure children understood that "we don't laugh when somebody makes a mistake" (**Sharing Dark Mountains**). Her desire for a gemeinschaft of equality was evident by the way she responded to Edward when she realized he was dominating the reading time during buddy reading and preventing his partner from reading his share of the time. This could have easily been missed if she had not been observant and had not had a tacit vision of what Edward and his partner needed to do to strive towards equality

(**Service in the Larger Community**). Marlene's gemeinschaft of otherness was noticeable in the way she modelled the kind of otherness which she wanted her students to strive for in social studies groups (**All of us are Teachers**). The emphasis upon social and emotional goals for Sasha to be able to relate better to others (**Living in the Outer Circle**), and for Donald to choose to work with his classmates more often (**Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance**), were aspects of Marlene's personal practical knowledge she stressed with parents during conference time. This suggests the strong desire which she had to create more of a focus upon generosity and otherness and to have this expressed in a willingness to associate with others.

Although Marlene's classroom actions that reflected a gemeinschaft perspective were "woven together like a quilt," it was evident that this quilt also had to have room for patches of gesellschaft (**Weaving a Supportive Fabric**). Marlene knew that this gemeinschaft perspective would not connect to the intentions of children if she made it the only perspective which was allowed in her classroom community. With regards to communitarian and caring ways of being with each other, Marlene knew that "kids aren't just going to pick that up from a few little chats." She was aware that "those are the kinds of things that you have to keep working on" (**Living in the Outer Circle**).

Marlene sometimes required children to work with partners. It seemed that she did this when she had a feeling they needed a bit more of an opportunity to develop a sense of relationship with others. She knew that "you have to work hard to build relationships, and each little thing that happens maybe makes it a little bit easier for you the next time" (**Giving Children Voice**). She knew that because they get lots of chances to work with their friends that "they are not going to miss out that much" by occasionally working with people she chose for them (**Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance**). She seemed to be able to sense when giving children an opportunity to work in ways that met their individual needs for association was needed. This did not mean that she abandoned her communitarian beliefs, but rather that she allowed students to voice their desires and responded to them when it seemed to be appropriate.

A desire for a balance between gemeinschaft and gesellschaft seemed to be part of Marlene's thinking when she provided choice to her students. Students were provided with opportunities to choose who they worked with and what sort of curriculum to construct on a fairly regular basis. They could read literature of their choice during quiet reading (**Children's Literature as Relational Community**), perform plays of their choice during partner reading and sharing (**Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community**), construct riddles of their choice during Tell and Guess (**All of us are Teachers**), and were sometimes given the chance to do free writing on their own topics in their writing folders (**Living In-Between Individualism and Acceptance**). Students were also allowed to exercise their sense of choice when they were regularly involved in identifying their own solutions to community conflicts. Marlene saw that it was important "to be able to voice things" and to "see that they have some direction in their education" (**Giving Children Voice**). She also saw that it was important for children to be left to make choices about solving conflicts with regards to classroom behavior (**Responsibility for Community**). Students were often provided with opportunities to work with their friends during math, to peer edit with them (**All of us are Teachers**), and to engage in play creation during partner reading with whom they wanted (**Partner Reading and the Sociality of Community**). Marlene felt it was very important for her students to have "lots of choice who they work with" (**All of us are Teachers**). This sense of choice seemed to provide students with an opportunity to meet their needs for individualism and affinity.

Marlene's narrative knowing made it possible for her vision of gemeinschaft to be lived out amidst gesellschaft. Her vision for gemeinschaft with elements of gesellschaft was embodied in her actions. The story of community which Marlene was living with her students combined an ideal notion of gemeinschaft with an informed realism about the will of gesellschaft which was constantly seeking to be a part of the way her students associated with one another. Although her actions were highly communitarian, her tacit recognition of the need to care for the individual and to recognize the inevitability of the societal forces of gesellschaft made this classroom the community that it was.

Concluding Thoughts

It is the living amidst gemeinschaft and gesellschaft which is at the heart of Marlene's classroom and is at the very heart of the communitarian-liberal debate. Like Gutmann (1985/1994; 1987) and Barber (1984), who attack the "either-or" dualisms of the liberal-communitarian debate, I too, see this dualism as a problematic response to living in association with the other. I agree with the critics of liberalism who claim that individualism and a quest for liberty is part of the reason for the social malaise with which North American is afflicted (Taylor, 1985/1994) and that we have a great deal of reparation to do before we can say that society is a truly just place to be (Sandel, 1982/1994). However, I also recognize that the response of adhering to communitarian values to the exclusion of liberty and a sense of individualism may have serious repercussions for a sense of self.

After spending time in Marlene's classroom, I feel that I can offer some thoughts for teachers who may wish to embody a communitarian pedagogy alongside a recognition of the will of gesellschaft as their way of educating for social life. The promotion of the common good through the development of a sense of Hegelian we-ness helped to show Marlene's students possibilities for being more thoughtful and generous towards one another. The common good means that all citizens should benefit, but it does not need to mean that individuals must lose their sense of liberty in the process. Marlene's classroom allowed students to see they do not need to exist only for themselves, but can be there also for the well-being of the other. Through the possibilities of mutuality, students were shown that there is room in community for their own sense of self to be enhanced. By serving as academic and emotional helpers for their classmates, students are exposed to a social duty which they would not learn in classrooms that call upon students to work alone. They find that part of their own fortunes are tied to the well-being of the group, which may also help them to begin to see the health of the group as their civic or social responsibility. They can see their class as a gemeinschaft of place (Tonnies, 1887/1957) because they and the other individuals who are in association with them exist in a "common habitat" that calls upon them to cooperate in the affairs of the classroom.

The promotion of a general sense of equality means that students who dwell in community with one another can learn to feel comfortable with the expectation of being given the chance to achieve at a rate which is equal to their classmates. This means that an equalization principle is at work which does not privilege those with more talents. It is a gemeinschaft of mind which aims to be non-hierarchical and to strive for a we-ness which does not have class or ability boundaries.

Yet these communitarian principles are more palatable if they are tempered with a sense of individual caring that does not unduly frustrate and mute the sense of self through gesellschaft which individuals may also be seeking in the classroom. To ignore individualism may breed resistance and resentment amongst students or it may create a sense of dependence on others, but to totally embrace it may condone and perpetuate a sense of egocentrism which could lead to the hypertrophy of which Taylor speaks, by undermining the values of otherness which seem so necessary to prevent social conflict.

I watched Marlene live a "both-and" pedagogy with considerable skill and tactfulness. I watched as her practice resonated with a desire to provide equal access to education for all, regardless of ability, by calling upon the general duty of the more talented. I watched as this community which could have created a sense of dependence by the weak upon the strong, often appeared to enhance self confidence. I watched as this community which could have developed frustration on the part of the strong because of their obligation to the weak often made the strong feel honored to help those who needed help by creating a sense of general obligation towards their classmates. I watched as Marlene sometimes let the will of gesellschaft prevail and sometimes made sure it was not dominant. After watching Marlene I realize that her personal practical knowledge, which is saturated with gemeinschaft, but makes space for gesellschaft, has wonderful possibilities as a way of educating for social life in classrooms.

CHAPTER VIII

REFLECTIONS ON THE MEANING OF COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

Introduction

As the story of how Marlene's classroom was a community unfolded, another parallel story was going on at the same time. This was the story of how a researcher and a teacher and twenty three students live with one another and come to trust the process of research that is going on. As a doctoral student, I was intrigued by the sociality of Marlene's classroom and wanted to know how her classroom community could help me understand the place of classroom environments in shaping students' social responsibility. Marlene wanted to know how she could make her own classroom more of a community so her students could grow in their sense of social responsibility. The students seemed genuinely interested in me as a new person in their lives and were happy that I was going to spend time with them and write a "book" about their classroom. It was this mutual curiosity which led to our collaborative research relationship and to which I will now turn my attention. This chapter will explore the nature of collaboration between teacher and researcher, researcher and children, and teacher and children in classrooms. It reconsiders the meaning of research in conjunction with the needs, interests, and concerns of all those who are part of it. The way our various voices, with their differing intentions and meanings are shared and interpreted, provides an opportunity to explore meanings constructed in a collaborative context, and to consider the promises and challenges which this form of research holds for teacher education and development. Three themes which have relevance for collaboration in classrooms emerged : 1) The need to recognize differing conceptions of time by the researcher and the researched, 2) the significance of differing intentions which individuals bring to the research question, and 3) a recognition of the challenges and promises of sharing a research project with children in a collaborative way.

Collaborative Classroom Research and Differing Views of Time

Recognition of the busy-ness and immediacy of classroom teaching is a key principle which guided the research in Marlene's classroom. The many demands which are placed upon the lives of teachers often makes it difficult for them to find the time to co-labor with university researchers. This dissertation showed the need to recognize the issues of time which concern both teacher researcher and university researcher, and to keep them at the center of the research agenda.

It became evident from the beginning of my research relationship with Marlene that the rhythm of her life as a teacher meant she had little time to herself during the teaching day. Not only was she busy with teaching, but she was inundated with responsibilities from other aspects of her work. She had interviews with all the parents of her students. A film crew videoed her classroom for an educational television production. Four teachers from other schools visited and observed in her class. Two writers of a math textbook she was piloting spent a number of math periods with her. Several parents of future students observed in her classroom to find out about her education program, and four parents regularly volunteered in her classroom. These events were in addition to regular school routines such as collecting money for the spell-a-thon, organizing cross-age events for the entire school, being on regular morning, recess, and noon-hour supervision duties, planning for the school family barbecue and the parent appreciation tea, organizing the field trip to the dinosaur exhibit, carrying out a weekly set up and take down of the gymnastics equipment in the gym, and planning and preparing for day to day happenings.

Time was a significant issue for Marlene, as it is for all teachers because of the immediacy of teaching and the many pressing and often difficult to fulfill needs which her students had. This pressure to fit the many school demands into her day was a major theme of her teaching life.

> M- I guess my biggest worry right now is the time, and I guess that is always a worry for teachers. The year always seems to fly by and you've only got half of what you want to get done. . . . I am getting worried about conference reports because I know that takes me a very long time to do that. I am trying to think when am I going to do it. . . . And . . . with our dinosaur commitments for the next three weeks that sort of comes out of your social time. . . . I can't give up my math time because of the testing that is coming up and that kind of thing, and then this pilot. . . and just trying to sort out when I am going to do things (Marlene conversation, April 27, 1993, p. 2).

Marlene was excited about the possibilities of researching her own classroom but she was concerned that her time remain in her control. One of the conditions she wanted to place upon her involvement in this collaborative study was that she be free to choose the time that we met to discuss our research. She maintains her professional health by getting out of the school at noon and after school so that when she is in the school, she can remain focused on the children and the many demands of teaching. The conversations which we held about her classroom had to fit into her time frame so she would not be pulled away from her major focus. I was one of many individuals placing demands upon her time and I knew I could easily become a major burden on her if I was not careful. Nevertheless, she indicated that it was normal for her to have many people in her room and she was comfortable with me being there.

To me, time was also important, because I was on a tight research schedule. I would only be available for the three months of April, May and June. I had to get our conversations taped and transcribed so I would not fall behind in providing these for Marlene to read. I was constantly wondering: Do we have enough data? Are we meeting enough to discuss classroom events? Am I getting enough time with the children during and after classroom activities so that we can get a broad perspective of classroom life? This meant my view of what should be happening was focused upon my concerns for seeing as much of the classroom as I could to meet my obligations as a doctoral researcher.

Marlene's time pressures confirmed for me the need to help her with the daily chores of her classroom so she would be free to talk regularly. I made a special effort to do as many of the time-consuming preparatory activities for her as I could so she would have less stresses of preparation. I did such things as marking math each noon hour, planning social studies activities, doing her photocopying, and generally taking on emerging activities and duties when they appeared necessary. This helped Marlene and it gave me more of an empathy for the demands of her teaching role.

Time has very important implications for face-to-face collaboration in classrooms. Respecting each others' concerns for time symbolizes a way in which we can show our caring for one another as we live together as researchers. Marlene and I had differing concerns about time, and this alerted us to the need to respect each other's goals for the research project and to realize that the research project was but a small part of Marlene's work-related obligations. Our collaboration was about working together, not simply researching together. As the outsider in Marlene's classroom I was not unlike a guest in her home. Just as a guest who is around for an extended period of time will "pitch in" and help out with household chores and show a caring for the general well-being of the events of the house, so too should a researcher who is around for extended periods of time. I believe collaborative research in classrooms must aim for much more than theoretical or practical understanding, it must also demonstrate a sense of caring for the work of practice through a mutuality of labor. It was from this intial perspective that we realized we must be sensitive to each other's intentions, if our research was to be collaborative and pedagogically significant.

Differing Intentions for Educational Research

Differences in our respective educational intentions became more and more evident as we labored together in the classroom. These differences were manifested in the roles we found ourselves playing in the teaching/research process. The classroom research in which Marlene and I engaged meant that I was interacting with the children on a regular basis in order to help us figure out what sense they were making of her classroom as a community with elements of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft. Although I saw this through my doctoral research lens, Marlene saw it through her teacher research lens.

> M- Your role with the kids. I think that is. . . important. Trying to get to know them. . . through working with them at gym, playing ball, that kind of thing, because you get to see different aspects, particularly the social aspect of what is going on. Things that. . . maybe I have missed too. . . . Listening to the kids in the group, and helping them. . . . I think it is important for the role of the child in the classroom. I guess I am always thinking of what is best for the child, and. . . I think if I wouldn't have thought there was going to be a benefit to the children in this then I wouldn't have agreed to do it. It wasn't. . . making it easier for me, but what can make it better for the kids in this room. . . . You are extra help for them. A role model, as a male. Because I am a female. . . . Things like that (Marlene conversation, April 27, 1993).

I performed as a teacher assistant for many tasks and taught some lessons, but my role in the classroom was different than Marlene's. I did not have the power that Marlene did, and although I could take some of the pressure off of her by doing some teaching, my position was subordinate. Marlene and I commented about our different roles.

> J- When it comes to many teachable moments you would probably transform those situations, whereas. . . on a number of them I don't act . . .

> . One reason is that I can't do it the same way because I don't have the power in here to do it.
> M- I think it is neat when I do handle them. You can watch and see exactly what I do and you can say to yourself, "Would I do it that way?, or would I change it to a different way?" or "Now I see why they do certain things" (Marlene conversation, May 3, 1993, p. 1).

We talked about the different roles we played in the research process. When I asked Marlene for her opinion about how I might express her actions in the classroom in words she replied that this was something which she saw as my responsibility and not hers. "There are all these wonderful things. . . . How do I begin to capture it in print?" I asked. "I'm glad that is your job and not mine" she replied (Marlene conversation, April 14, 1993, p. 7).

Marlene was interested in researching her classroom, but forays into the literature to contextualize issues in a broad theoretical framework did not really interest her. When I raised my interest in her classroom as a way to understand other classrooms, Marlene was more interested in commenting about the meaning of this research for her classroom.

> J- Part of my goal is to see how. . . your classroom speaks to *other* classrooms.
> M- I have always said "What is best for working for *my* classroom?" That is why the things that I find really interesting reading. . . are the little anecdotal things that come up that you talk with the kids or conversations that you hear (Marlene conversation, May 3, 1993, p. 1).

Although we had different interests in the collaborative relationship, they complemented each other. As we tried to make sense out of Marlene's classroom as a community, Marlene always pushed for more relevance for the children in our talk. When we were discussing the meaning of a classroom activity for a group of the children, my desire to understand these children's world was not enough for Marlene. She used our emerging understanding to try to make the learning environment more focussed upon developing a sense of community for the children. As time passed, I saw this as much more central to our agenda, and it helped me to respect and honor this dimension to our collaboration more fully.

> J- The Math lesson between Marvin, Linda, and Kristen was. . . almost like a fairy tale. There is a problem and a solution that comes about when Marvin learned his math. You can see by the end of it that he knew how to do that.
> M- Maybe that is something that we could talk about with the kids, so that they can see the reason for me wanting them to do this. James and the ones that are having trouble know that is going to help them with their math, but does Edward think it is helping him? It would be interesting to pose the question to Edward and Randy, . . . who are fairly strong, and ask them. If they couldn't do a question, . . . how would they solve that? (Marlene conversation, May 3, 1993, p. 7).

Marlene saw the children's voices as being central to our research. When I was interviewing the children about their classroom creed, I was interested in asking them about the purpose of their creed, but Marlene saw these interviews as an opportunity to empower her students to further shape their community.

> M- I think. . . it would be neat to ask them what is it that they like about this class. . . . What kinds of things do they like in the classroom? . . . It would be kind of neat to ask them, "If there was anything that they could change in this classroom what would it be? What kinds of things would they do to make this a better classroom?" . . . besides having more gym (Marlene conversation, May 13, 1993, p. 8).

When I observed some children not beginning their Tell and Guess activity with the customary invitational comments, and mentioned this to Marlene, she saw this as another opportunity to have her students consider the activity as a way to help them be more responsible members of their community.

> J- Sometimes during Tell and Guess, people will say good watching and then others won't. I wonder if they just forget.
> M- Sometimes they don't need to say it because the other children are watching. . . . Maybe not all the time they need to be. . . doing that. Sometimes they. . . forget too, because I have to sort of prompt them. . . . It would be neat to ask them why it is important to watch, because it is important to watch (Marlene conversation, April 20, 1993, p. 5).

Part of the promise of collaboration relates to the possibilities it holds for meeting peoples' differing needs within the same project. As Marlene and I talked with a shared understanding and purpose about the issues of community that concerned us both, we came to realize that our research agendas were different, but complementary. I was interested in seeing how understanding Marlene's classroom as a community with aspects of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft could tell me something about living responsibly in other contexts. Marlene was naturally more focused upon using the data from our research to understand her *own* classroom so that she could make it a better place for her students, which shows her strong sense of caring for them. It was mainly because we were both focused upon achieving an understanding of community that we were able to labor in a common place to achieve our differing goals. This same but different agenda is an important feature of classroom-based collaborative research between people with diverse educational roles.

Co-laboring with Children

Children played a central part in this collaborative study, greatly influencing the understanding Marlene and I gained about community. Their comments allowed us to see the way the children were making sense out of their social context which helped us approach our respective educational contexts with more certainty. The children's comments reminded us of the importance of Paley's (1986) notion of curiosity as a guide for research and teaching with children. Although children's comments tended to strengthen the convictions which Marlene and I held about community, they also added new perspectives which showed how children were experiencing their environment, activities and classroom routines from their unique place as learners. These perspectives were either confirming of, or dissenting from, community.

Children confirmed the significance of this classroom as a place which created a sense of community for them. For instance, Cheryl's talk reminded us of the powerful message which was being sent to children through the physical environment of the classroom. She told us, "All over the room it says we are special and I am special. It always says we are special. So everybody knows, there's a whole bunch of signs" (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 38). Terry let us know about the importance of each child's uniqueness as an aspect of this community. "Every person is unique in a way. . . . They all do things their own way. I might do something one way and they might do it a different way" (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 10). The feelings which children registered about their classroom environment helped to convince Marlene and me of the importance of the hidden curriculum in sending positive messages to children.

By listening with curiosity, we heard students' perceptions of their fellow classmates place in their community. After I observed Carl, Marvin, Karne and Art during a readers' theatre practice, Carl told me "Nobody else picks Marvin and Karne for anything. . . . They are getting better at plays cuz we are helping them." Art supported Carl's comments and told me the reason for the boys' isolation was that, "Marvin is new and Karne is sort of new to this class" (Emperor's New Clothes interview, April 30, 1993, p. 2). These comments helped us understand their classroom community as a welcoming place and to show us the need to put more of an emphasis upon achieving this kind of social environment in this and other classrooms.

Childrens' expressions of their points of view also showed that they were internalizing both social and pedagogical reasons for community-oriented activities in the classroom. Tanya noted, "Ms. G. tells us why she puts us in groups and with partners . . . , to teach us to work with other people, because when we get a job we will have to work with other people. We can't work by ourselves" (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 7). Terry said, "I have learned to be cooperative with other people and to help them when they want help" (Buddy reading interviews, May 28, 1993, p. 5). Kristen internalized the problem-solving focus of the cozy corner.

> We are supposed to be in a circle and we work out problems there like if someone is throwing snowballs. . . . She will remind us not to do things like that because some people throw snowballs and you forget about it. . . . She doesn't say you have to do something. She just asks us what we can do about it (Student creed interviews, May 6, 1993, p. 20).

Karne talked about the sense of support provided by others.

> This group has been good because we have a partner and we share

> books. . . . They help me by sounding it out. They cover the word half of it, and that's all. It is okay when they help me. . . . I learn to be a good reader (Social studies interview, May 31, 1993, p. 3).

Tanya felt good about collaborating with Susan through peer editing.

> Instead of doing it just by yourself you have help. When you are doing it by yourself it is not very much fun because you have to lift your dictionary in your hand and then you have to do this and then when you find your word you have to. . . write it. . . . It is easier if you have two people. One can do looking up the words and one can do the writing down. It is just so fun (Peer editing interview, April 27, 1993, p. 2).

These children made us aware of their sense of community which helped us also see the validity of these activities for creating a socially and educationally responsible environment. Other children's comments about their classroom experiences helped confirm the value of listening carefully to their voices to better understand what they are experiencing in the classroom.

Although many of their comments were in support of the way Marlene's classroom community was organized, children felt they could openly show their dissention from the way community was being lived in the classroom. Their desire to have space for affinity and individualism in their classroom were freely voiced to me. This formed an important forum through which they voiced their desires for some changes in their classroom. When classroom activities were frustrating them because they found that they had little room for gesellschaft, they did not hesitate to say so. Mandy commented about having to share gym class with another class.

> Sometimes it is kinda really not fair when Ms. Andrew's class comes with us, because sometimes I just want to be with my class. I don't know why but it is kinda boring when other people always have to come with you. You can't be with your same class for phys. ed. or anything (Student interviews, June 14, 1993, p. 4).

Kristen's frustration with being expected to work with two partners in math exemplifies her struggle to live in a community that was too heavily weighted towards the will of gemeinschaft.

> I don't like working with partners that need a lot of help, but just a little bit of help because I get all mixed up. . . . Linda needed help on rounding and Marvin needed help on rounding and I didn't know who to help first because Linda forgot how to round and Marvin didn't know how to round. It is okay except for when I have two people at once. That gets sort of hard. I feel frustrated (Math interviews, May 3, 1993, p. 6).

Edward also found it frustrating to be asked to work with others. "I didn't like switching books because it slows me down. . . . I am finished and they are still writing the question down" (Edward interview, April 30, 1993, p. 1). Donald talked about his desire to work alone when he had to work with partners.

> Sometimes when. . . we have to work together I just want to work by myself. . . I kind of have no choice. . . even though the person is slow at math (Math interviews, May 20, 1993, p. 2). I didn't really like slow partners. . . but sometimes you just have to wait up. A fact of life (Math interviews, May 20, 1993, p. 4).

Engaging in research which strived to involve students as collaborative participants and included their voices in the research text had pedagogical significance for this classroom. Listening with curiosity to what children had to say allowed us to hear things that might not normally be heard. Their stories helped Marlene and me to see ways that her classroom community was and was not meeting the students' needs for association through gemeinschaft and gesellschaft.

Marlene wanted to know how her classroom could become more of a community to improve her students' social responsibility. Her comments about our new understanding of the children's perceptions of the classroom creed are indicative of this knowing which she sought.

> M- I think it is really good bringing in the children, and having them talk about what they think. I am learning from this that I need to spend more time on talking about the creed and revisit it more often, because the kids aren't able to articulate it. From reading the creed interviews with the students I know that I need to do more of that next year. Some can. . . but not all of them, so that is telling me that I need to talk more about that (Marlene conversation, May 13, 1993, p. 7).

By reading about my interactions with the children, Marlene had the opportunity to develop more of a feeling for her childrens' perspectives on the classroom. She put it this way.

> M- How can I help my philosophy be more strong. . . by looking at the voice of the kids. When you are teaching in classrooms by yourself you don't hear that voice as much as I am getting to hear it with you interviewing. . . . Talking about the kinds of things. . . they don't like such as exchanging books. . . From reading and reflecting upon what I have read in here,. . . I have been looking at . . . how I can change. . . I really feel that you have to keep learning and keep looking at what you are doing and looking to see what you can do better (Marlene conversation, May 13, 1993, p. 1).

This eavesdropping on her own classroom meant Marlene could make changes that fit with her desires for classroom community, but it also helped her see that her personal practical knowledge had to be flexible. For instance, when Kristen expressed frustration about being the teacher to two students during math, it revealed to me the struggle to work with others in community when the will of gesellschaft was not sufficiently present . To Marlene, reading my field notes gave her a better sense of Kristen's frustration so she could put this new knowing to work to help Kristen feel less frustrated. "Kristen made the comment that she had a hard time working with three, so I am going to let somebody else have the responsibility of working with three this time (Marlene conversation, May 13, 1993, p. 4).

This collaborative research with children also has relevance for other classrooms because it serves as a model of how to provide children with a voice in determining the direction in their own classrooms. When children talked to me as researcher, their intentions were partly geared towards expressing their satisfaction with the status quo or with voicing their dissention in order to change the status quo. Collaborative research with children has the potential to shape the future direction of classroom events which can make classroom life more positive for children, because the issues that they surface often have a different focus from what adults would see in the same situation.

By working with Marlene directly in her classroom, I was also able to become attuned to the importance which she and her students placed upon classroom perspectives that influenced citizenship education and to reflect upon the meaning of this for other classrooms. They showed me that classroom relationships are an important way to contribute to an education for social life. Learning about classroom relationships and developing a sense of self both occur in one form or another in classrooms regardless of what we teach. Classroom research of this ilk can serve as a form of action research to help teachers see the centrality of their classroom environment in shaping education for social life, and as a form of research which helps further our understanding of classrooms as a place where citizenship education is continuously being learned.

Conclusion: Implications for Classroom-Based Collaborative Research

In my work with Marlene and her students, it was possible for us to achieve our respective intentions because we strived to hear and understand each others' intentions. Marlene was able to research her own practice by thinking about community as she received support, comradeship, and educational insights from another adult. This helped her see the relevance of notions of community for her classroom and to use this knowing to make her classroom more of a community. I was able to further my understanding of community by working with Marlene at the micro level of the classroom as I thought also of broad connections to citizenship education for social responsibility.

Collaborative research in classrooms must recognize and respond to the differing perceptions of time which are at the heart of the teaching-research relationship. Common work can be enhanced if the collaborators sense these temporal needs and account for them through their actions. Marlene was able to see that I valued her time by the way that I was willing to honor it through giving of my own time to do things which helped her practice. I came to understand her work through the time she made to include me in her practice and to talk to me of her narrative knowing. This sense of caring for practice helps solidify and make equal peoples' respective roles in the research process.

Research which is "truly" collaborative hears and responds to the differing intentions of those involved. This is not easy, since the pressures of classroom life and peoples' differing intentions can take participants in opposing directions. Children, classroom teacher and university researcher must be allowed to have differing intentions which are both voiced and lived. For Marlene, her students and me, our common purpose was a general pursuit of an understanding of community. It was evident that Marlene and I both saw community as an important focus of classrooms. This was also evident in many of the children's comments, such as those which stated "we are all special" and "everyone is unique". Yet patterns of difference are equally important for participants to share. Marlene and I were able to differ on our research intentions, and students like Donald, Kristen and Edward were able to dissent from the vision of community which Marlene had for them.

Hearing the voices of children provides an opportunity to become aware of the differing aspirations which children have for their place in classrooms. Their voices provide a window into their world that is possible only if we involve them in discussions about classrooms. But hearing their voices must be also connected to an obligation to have our practice be responsive to students' intentions. Collaboration with children may be a way to begin to more fully democratize classroom practice, since it can make space for their needs to be heard, and, where feasible and appropriate, incorporated into the classroom.

Nodding's call for research to have fidelity and be responsive to the needs and interests of university researchers, teachers and students allows us to think of research as a process which responds to the differing intentions of its participants. Collaboration does not occur unless there is work to be done together. There must be a common purpose to guide the relationship, since an individualistic agenda cannot create a relationship of mutual benefit. Marlene and I were able to retain and develop our different intentions at the same time that we were able to benefit from the security of common labor. This meant we could weave a fabric of commonality that also had space for difference.

CHAPTER IX

REFLECTIVE THOUGHTS

Introduction

It is now time to return to my initial thoughts about community and about educational research and to explore how they have been influenced as I engaged in this research story. From the time I wrote the story about Robby and my own teaching, many stories of community have been told and re-told. In this last chapter I will reflect back on the path which I have followed as part of this research story and discuss my awakening (Clandinin and Connelly, forthcoming) to a new understanding of the meaning of community and of educational research. I offer my reflective thinking about the changes in my naive notion of community and the impact of this research upon my vision of social studies and citizenship education, my perspective on teacher education, my sense making about this form of research, my view of future research directions, and how this work has been or could be influential in children's lives.

A Return to the Beginning: My Naive Notion of Community

As a teacher who aspired to what I now call communitarian or gemeinschaft perspectives, I see that my view of teaching stemmed from the traditional kinship and friendship groups which naturally emerged in the northern classrooms where I taught. These groups were spaces where children of diverse interests and abilities were able to exert positive influences upon each other as learners through the power of synergism. I saw children achieve wonderful goals for themselves by helping others who were struggling academically or socially. It stemmed also from my own sense of community which emerged as I taught in a healthy school where collegial sharing flourished .

This research has challenged my naive and simplistic notion of community. When I began this research, I saw community as being practically synonymous with sharing and cooperation and my initial thoughts on researching this phenomenon were based on how I might find community in its "pure" form. Learning and living in classrooms which taught private and individualistic dispositions seemed to be totally out of place with communitarian perspectives. Yet there were always students in my classrooms and teachers in schools where I taught who wished to do their work alone, and who accomplished this as well as their synergistic colleagues. There were also activities in which students who were communally oriented wished to be left to their own devices to carry out individual intentions.

I sensed there must be more to community than cooperation and sharing. I wondered how education could ensure that we not over value social practices at the expense of individual consciousness (Trimbur, 1989), as it simultaneously explored what it meant to give children the opportunity to experience collaborative learning, although philosophically I leaned heavily towards a pedagogy which was communal in its orientation. I was intrigued by how educators choose to strike the balance between what seemed to be extremely opposite aspects of classroom life, and I had struggled to figure out what this meant for students who *must* live in community with others. And so, as I listened to conversations in Marlene's classroom, I sought to understand what they told me of this form of community and what this might mean for citizenship education and social studies, teacher education, educational research, and children.

Classroom Community and Education for Social Life

I asked myself what ways of knowing can be heard through this inquiry that show us new ways of thinking about citizenship education and help us consider new possibilities for living together in classrooms that may contribute implicitly to education for social life.

I think that the stories about community which were lived and told in Marlene's classroom, the literature which I read about community, and my re-storying of notions of community has helped me to see that education for social life can be all around us in our actions, thoughts and dreams. If education for social life is reserved for the time in which social studies is taught, responsible living together will not be easily realized through classroom practice.

I have come to know that women's perspectives about citizenship and education for social life, especially those from a communitarian perspective, have been ignored in both education and political circles, and this is a seriously limiting feature of our conception of democracy, since it ignores many aspects of public life which people are constantly engaged in living. There is much more to social life than the legalistic and political notions of our legislatures, parliaments, and law courts. Much of public association is informal, interpersonal, communal and affective in nature, and is based upon a gemeinschaft orientation; whereas much of our talk about politics is formal, individualistic, impersonal and rational and is based upon a gesellschaft orientation.

Communitarian feminists have much to tell us about the infusion of these gemeinschaft orientations into our deliberations about the political. They also have much to tell us about the value of non-political discussions as part of our discussions about citizenship. If we dim but do not extinguish the focus upon the political and sharpen the focus upon the values of gemeinschaft, we find that many things which are not deemed worthy of discussion in the current political world can become a central part of the discourse on citizenship which is communitarian. Citizens become people who feel part of a gemeinschaft of place and who associate together for common public purposes. Citizens become people who feel a gemeinschaft of mind and care about the other, not because they have to, but because they want to. When translated into social interactions, this sense of gemeinschaft of otherness has the potential to serve as a way to dispel much that is individualistic and conflictual in relationships. Citizens become people who are searching for ways by which they can enhance their own sense of self *as* they enhance the other, rather than people who enhance themselves at the *expense* of the other.

Marlene's classroom is a place in which students learn a great deal about education for social life. They come to know that they are learning in a gemeinschaft of place which is socially situated. They come to know that they are dwelling amongst others who have needs and wants which are sometimes similar to, and sometimes quite different from their own, but these needs are nonetheless important than their own. Education for social life in Marlene's classroom teaches children that they should strive for a gemeinschaft of mind and action. They learn that they have an obligation to assist those who may be less fortunate than they are with regards to a particular skill and that these people have talents which they will in turn, share with them.

Classroom relationships are an important way to contribute to an education for social life, and the kind of citizenship education which we want to perpetuate is tied inseparably to how we do what we do in classrooms. Communitarian classrooms can be places where children learn a great deal about relating with others and where they come to better understand their own sense of self. Learning about classroom relationships and developing a sense of self both occur in one form or another in classrooms regardless of what we teach. But classrooms which have a hidden curriculum which promotes gesellschaft at the expense of gemeinschaft would require an alteration in the way they look at the activities for content learning in classrooms if they are to contribute to a sense of citizenship which is communitarian in orientation. Since the subject of social studies sees education for democratic citizenship as its central goal (National Council of Social Studies, 1984), it is reasonable to assume that classroom relationships should be a part of how we do this.

A way of thinking which is communitarian in its leanings can potentially transform citizenship education into a form of pedagogy which more teachers strive for if they attend to the actions and language which defines their practice. This means democracy becomes a part of what each teacher does in his/her classroom, and the gemeinschaft-communitarian values of we-ness, generosity, caring, participation, otherness, and the common good rub up against gesellschaft-liberal notions of liberty, equality and autonomy. By making the values of gemeinschaft a central aspect of classroom practice, the hidden curriculum becomes uncovered and its deconstructive orientation becomes constructive. I believe this form of communitarian education has a potential place in teacher education, and I asked myself how this might be.

Classroom Community and Teacher Education

I asked myself, how will what I learned in Marlene's classroom help me to live more productively in this gap between the intentions of the academy and classroom and how can teacher education be influenced by closer attention to a communitarian perspective?

As I consider the meaning of Marlene's personal practical knowledge, I am drawn to thinking about the undergraduates with whom I work as a teacher educator. There is much in Marlene's pedagogy which can help me make sense of what it is I want student-teachers to think and feel as prospective teachers. Teaching need not be a craft which is separate from love, emotions and caring. As a teacher, Marlene showed her caring to her students in many ways and it had a significant impact upon their thinking about how they should relate to their classmates. By allowing herself to express emotions of joy and sorrow she was sending a signal to children that it is acceptable and desirable to live an emotional life in public.

Teachers can model a sense of otherness and make the expectations of community explicit so that children will know the gemeinschaft values which they stand for. Marlene believed strongly in modelling ways to relate responsibly to the other in community, and this was very useful for children to focus upon as a framework for their own actions. By establishing her vision in a concrete fashion, she made it possible for her students to see possibilities of community which they would otherwise not have explicitly been made aware of.

Teaching with a conviction is often made more palatable to those who are the learners if it comes with a sense of flexibility and a willingness to respond to the differing needs and intentions of individuals. Marlene's desire for a communitarian classroom which was caring and responsible for all was made stronger by her readiness to listen to the voices of her students in order to hear their frustrations and to transform them into joys. By adjusting her intentions for her students when it seemed they needed more opportunity for a gesellschaft world, Marlene did not weaken her own gemeinschaft beliefs, but rather, she made it more likely that they would be accepted.

The formal curriculum of classrooms can help teachers promote a sense of community by stressing knowledge, skills and values which are communitarian. The books, texts and audio-visual resources which Marlene consciously chose to fill her classroom with came largely from a gemeinschaft perspective, and her emphasis upon these curriculum materials was further enhanced by her communitarian outlook on teaching. This shows how teachers can more thoroughly promote a vision of education by making careful choices about the connection between the formal and hidden curricula of the classroom.

Forces of gesellschaft which attempt to erode community may not do so if communitarian teachers quietly and determinedly strive for what they believe in. Teachers can live productively in-between their own communal approaches and those of system wide controls by making simple adjustments in the way they administer and discuss standardized tests. By remaining committed to a sense of fidelity to the individual, Marlene was able to shield her students from the more negative aspects of system and province-wide achievement tests.

As a teacher educator I can model a gemeinschaft-communitarian world for my students. I believe it has a place in public schools, and in the academy. As a teacher educator I have an obligation to have the pedagogy which I believe should be part of public school classrooms be mirrored in my university classroom and to make this pedagogy explicit to my students. If there is a philosophical fit between my approach to teaching and the methods which I describe to students, then my students may be more likely to see a communitarian approach as a legitimate and credible approach for education for social life. I can proceed to teach about communitarian perspectives with a sense of confidence that this way of being with learners is beneficial, because I have seen it work successfully in Marlene's classroom. I can share stories of this classroom which reveal its success and challenges, and I can also use these experiences to look back upon other classroom experiences of which I am familiar. I feel an obligation to raise the importance of communitarian values but I feel also that I have to make it possible for students to come to their own conclusions about the place of this form of teaching in their lives as teachers.

Finally, spending time in Marlene's classroom has helped me see the dangers of dualisms, and the need to approach the issue of communitarian classroom pedagogy more as a philosophical leaning then as an absolute. Marlene demonstrated the need to be both highly committed and flexible with regards to ones' philosophical convictions. The gesellschaft forces of her classroom called upon her to adjust but not abandon her strong gemeinschaft convictions. Student-teachers who learn to avoid an "either-or" mentality when it comes to philosophy, and to replace this dualistic certainty with a philosophical conviction based upon a caring for the individual may begin to see uncertainty as a strength and not as a weakness. Once student-teachers realize that certainty about teaching is not a universal truth, perhaps they will be able to diminish the washing-out effect of pedagogical knowledge which they learn in university which seems to accompany student teachers as they are inducted into the school system (Zeichner & Gore, 1990).

Teacher education at the graduate level can also be influenced by a communitarian pedagogy. In graduate classes in both general curriculum and social studies, a closer attention to the significance of classroom relationships may assist in altering the over emphasis upon the formal curriculum as the main focus of curriculum theory. It can do this in a way which is more likely to be embraced by teachers because it focuses upon constructive aspects of classroom relationships which are central to what children learn. A focus upon communitarian pedagogy honors good practice rather than denigrating teachers, which the focus upon the hidden curriculum so often does.

The process of educating teachers to educate for social life cannot use what we know about classroom relationships to contribute towards a more gemeinschaft oriented form of teaching which is caring, generous and other-centered if teachers do not understand this connection themselves. If this connection is to be learned by teachers, it is the responsibility of teacher education to provide a space for it to be learned at the pre-service and in-service level. This requires a form of teacher education which includes a more thorough study of hidden curriculum, but which does so by uncovering the positive aspects of hidden curriculum in "Schools that Work" (Wood, 1992) rather than by deconstructing the negative aspects of practice. It therefore calls for an ethics of the personal as it explores aspects of the social.

Collaborative Research and Community

This research has caused me to reflect upon the research process in which I engaged. I feel this research brought together a variety of research perspectives which make it worth considering as a distinctive form of research.

It is personal experience research because it remains faithful to the experiences of the individual, and tries to hear their stories and to give them voice, but not to wrong them. Yet it is not typical of many narrative studies which focus primarily upon the oral stories of participants (Craig, 1992; Olson, 1993; Sewall, 1994) because it is equally intent upon understanding the embodied narratives which are observed in the practice context. This focus upon embodied narratives allowed me to hear and understand stories that I could not have if I had listened to Marlene's stories from the outside of her classroom. It therefore has elements of ethnography to it, because it seeks to understand classroom life by inhabiting the classroom, constructing a microscopic account of happenings, and becoming a part of the narrative (Geertz, 1973), although it does not ignore the participants' voices (Florio-Ruane, 1991). It is collaborative research, but it seeks to give collaboration with children an equal place on the research agenda, which is also uncommon in collaborative studies (McKay, 1990). It is rooted also in aspects of sociological research, because it sees the social world as inseparable from the personal, and attempts to account for social and political aspects of classroom practice (Liston & Zeichner, 1991). The very question of citizenship is inherently sociological and political and this study seeks to make the social world meet with the personal by exploring socially conscious issues while remaining firmly situated in a personal experience ethics and method. For these reasons, I call this research socio-ethnographic narrative research.

Naming this research begs the question of what sort of epistemology might it unearth, and why might this be useful? It is not difficult to find the roots of this in my literature review. I was attracted to the work of many of the hidden curriculum scholars for what their form of knowing might tell me about the socio-political importance of classrooms. I was also drawn to the hidden curriculum research and classroom climate research because of its potential to see inside of classrooms, and to understand the specificity of classrooms and what this might tell us about socially responsible pedagogy. But I was frustrated with the unethical research approaches of both of these methods and sought a research method with an ethics of fidelity (Noddings, 1986). Personal experience methods (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994) fulfilled this ethical void, yet I had to link this method with socio-political analysis (Bricker, 1989; Daly, 1994; Tonnies, 1887/1957; Friedman, 1983) in order to develop the kind of epistemological framework which I was seeking.

This has, I believe, resulted in a socio-ethnographic form of narrative research which is at once able to see the world in both a broad socio-political and microscopically personal fashion, while it concomitantly remains committed to a relational form of inquiry. It has provided access to the inner classroom world of a communitarian teacher by playing a believing game (Craig, 1992; Elbow, 1986) which is based on fidelity, trust, and collaboration.

Access to the many kinds of classrooms which tell different stories of education for social life is key to transforming the distant intelligensia voice into a more caring and personally relevant form of socially responsible citizenship education. By hearing voices such as the communitarian one of Marlene's, we begin to more clearly see the complexities of classroom life which make distant and abstract citizenship rationales inappropriate, and the practically grounded, sometimes voiced and always embodied teacher rationales more appropriate. Yet I contend many of these appropriate rationales will remain silent if we continue to value the text over the person, because teachers will not give researchers access to their worlds if their voices are twisted to suit the deconstructive political agenda of the intelligensia without the complicity of the researched. The rationales for classroom based citizenship education may also yield incomplete stories if researchers remain outside of the classroom, because so much of teacher knowledge can be made sense of only in its personal and social context, and many of the researchers' questions can only become personally meaningful when connected to the lives of teachers and learners. Collaboration becomes most significant for understanding classroom community as researchers look at the classroom from their world, ask the questions which concern them and ask that teachers do the same. The differing questions of teacher and researcher provide an opportunity to push each other's epistemelogical borders in a way that may achieve the Gadmerian fusion of horizons (Smith, 1991; Crusius, 1991) through dialogue and co-labor.

This study has explored teacher knowledge by carrying out a multi-vocal inquiry, with space for different voices in a way that furthered Marlene's and my own pedagogical beliefs. This attention to different aspects of voice within an individual and between individuals holds promise as an approach to research which allows for attention to be placed upon a variety of intentions. If we seriously pursue the inclusion of divergent and multi-vocal voices in educational research, it may help facilitate the inclusion of more ways of knowing and more ways of doing in our research endeavors.

Research which is socio-ethnographic and narrative in orientation becomes useful for both theoretical and practical reasons. It achieves an access to places and questions which are usually explored through one or more but not all of the social, ethnographic, narrative or collaborative approaches, and in doing so, also has access to a different epistemological lens, and a different educational terrain. Questions explored from this spatial and conceptual vantage point attempt to weave the personal, the socio-political, the microscopic and the practical into a new fabric which is more than what could be found through a less encompassing process.

This pattern of inquiry also brings a new theoretical window for both researcher and researched since it opens up new aspects of work for scrutiny and enables those who co-labor to approach their work in more productive and connected ways. By being another set of eyes in Marlene's classroom, I was able to see things which she could not see, in both a literal and conceptual sense. She used this new form of knowing to strengthen her convictions about her practice and to make classroom life more communitarian for her students.

By observing, listening to, and participating in the communitarian pedagogy of Marlene's classroom, I was able to see a new form of citizenship which the intelligensia had not seen. Marlene's form of citizenship education was gemeinschaft in orientation yet pragmatically caring and open to include elements of gesellschaft. For me this meant that I was able to see citizenship education as it was lived in this classroom, which helped me to challenge and transform both my theoretical and pedagogical conceptions of citizenship education in a way which I could not have done if I listened only to intelligensia voices. Neither of us could have achieved our sense of knowing without the other's dialogue and labor, and therefore I see collaboration as a key component of research for education for social life.

Reflections on Future Research Directions

As I look ahead to other research projects which I might undertake to expand upon the findings which have been presented here, I am drawn to three areas. First of all, I would like to hear other voices of practicing classroom teachers and their students which speak of their perspectives on citizenship education; particularly, though not exclusively, perspectives which lean towards communitarianism. What classroom dynamics happen in other classrooms which are more or less communitarian than Marlene's? What might they tell us which would further our notions of citizenship education and take us in other directions than those in which we are currently journeying? How might a communitarian form of pedagogy make sense in a high school setting- that bastion of gesellschaft which is constantly shifting students from class to class, continually changing their community compositions, and often engaging in an individualistic pedagogy which de-legitimizes collaboration?

Secondly, what ways can a focus upon community be further explored in university based teacher education settings, which are equally notorious for perpetuating a gesellschaft world through their programatic hidden curriculum, despite the efforts of many fine teacher educators? How do students respond to the philosophical and methodological possibilities of a communitarian form of pedagogy and how does this perspective unfold as they journey towards becoming a teacher? What might this mean for implementing a communitarian pedagogy in public school classrooms? When this form of pedagogy is mirrored in the university classroom, what joys and frustrations are called forth through teachers' and learners' voices?

Finally, what borders are being crossed through socio-ethnographic narrative research which have not been crossed through ethnography, critical theory, hermeneutic-phenomenology or narrative? I have mentioned the need to unite the notions of the personal experience method with the social conditions of schooling. I feel that this may bring new insights because of the new research spaces which may be accessible and because of the new lenses through which we gaze. A research focus upon the microscopic and ever-changing world of the classroom is potentially damaging to the teacher if an ethic built on fidelity and trust is not central to its purpose. The very nature of sociological and political research is situated in the complexities of power and control which can so easily be construed so as to call into question the credibility of the teacher. This calls for extra sensitivity in the design, implementation, and re-presentation of collaborative research which is both microscopic and social. But the possibilities for new conceptual understandings are endless if access to doors which are currently closed to researchers can somehow be opened and a socio-ethnographic form of narratology is pursued. This may yield new insight into the world of administrators, counsellors, daycare and playschool settings and a host of other educational contexts.

Classroom Community, Collaborative Research and Children

It seems fitting to close this dissertation by reflecting upon its meaning and potential benefit to children-those who dwelled in Marlene's classroom during the study, those who may dwell in her classroom down the road, and to those children everywhere who might experience a communitarian form of pedagogy. What does this study mean for them?

This study of Marlene's communitarian classroom helped us to better understand how being in classrooms that are based on caring, generosity and otherness can be both socially and academically rewarding for students. By reading my field notes and the transcripts of student interviews, Marlene heard voices which spoke of the benefits of living in community with others, of the values which they were learning, and the values which they were not learning which perhaps should be expanded upon. This has meant that Marlene's belief in her practice was challenged but affirmed, which has led her to consider ways to make her practice more gemeinschaft at the same time that she seeks to provide more opportunities for aspects of gesellschaft. From the insights which a new set of eyes made possible, Marlene realized that her commitment to furthering a gemeinschaft world for her students was a workable and worthy aspiration.

I think that by giving the children the chance to tell their story, they had the opportunity to give voice to their joys and frustrations about living in a gemeinschaft classroom. For those who felt that this classroom benefitted their academic and social development, it was an opportunity to speak back to Marlene with gratitude. For those who were occasionally frustrated by the demands of gemeinschaft, it provided an opportunity for their protestations to be voiced and heard by Marlene. In a number of cases, she acted upon their expressed frustrations by altering the amount of time which they had to devote to the assistance of others, or she acknowledged and expressed gratitude for their role in helping others.

By helping with math, working with groups, and being available during all activities as an assistant, I was able to engage in many minor pedagogical moments which helped people learn in both academic and social ways. Sometimes I helped them sort out their group differences by having them reflect upon their actions and to formulate plans for changing their group behavior. At other times I helped them to understand difficult math questions or to understand the meaning of written texts. I brought my experiences in First Nations communities to our discussions about the key idea of "Tolerance, Understanding and Acceptance" and did what I could to share these and other worldly experiences freely. By spending time with the children, talking to them, and working with them, they obtained more adult contact then if I had not been present. I tried to listen to them, to empathize with their concerns, and to be a friend. I think this was beneficial in providing some attention and emotional support and this would have not been possible if I hadn't taken the time to listen to them one on one and in small groups. Children became my friends, and several of us have continued to keep in touch through letters. Cheryl's words written to me in the form of a letter which she presented to me on my last day as a researcher in her classroom expresses her feelings about having a researcher in her life.

"Thak you for being in are klasroom. . . you are kind and genaris to all uf us. . . I what to thak you for helping us solf problums betwen us. and it is very kind that you are riting a book abut are klasroom, Love, Cheryl."

Children can learn about citizenship in a gemeinschaft classroom in ways which have the potential to alter how we live in association with one another. We live in troubled times, and a focus upon community values may help children to understand that as citizens of many communities, they cannot ignore the emotions, intentions, needs, and aspirations of others.

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